

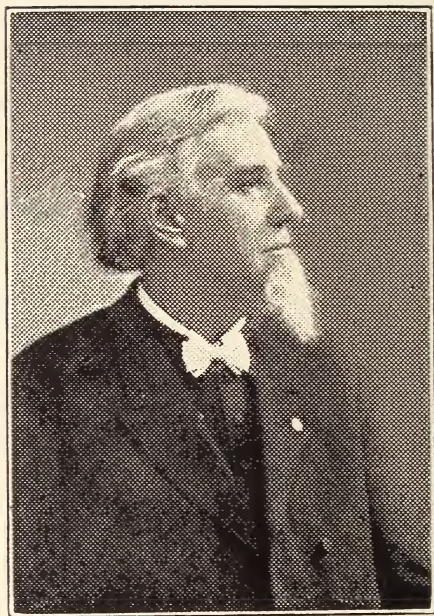


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H. W. Bolton

Victory Assured

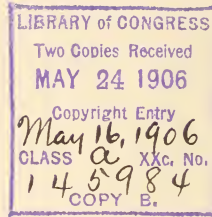
Sermons Preached by

H. W. BOLTON, D. D.

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PRESS OF
L. F. BONAHER & SON
CAMDEN, N. J.
1906

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THE REASON.

These sermons were not called forth by a "desire to rush into print." They were delivered by the author at the Pentecostal services in connection with the seventieth session of the New Jersey Annual Conference. So many kind words were spoken, so many were the testimonies as to help received, that after much prayer, the preacher has yielded to the requests of his brethren that they be given a more enduring form. In this spirit they are sent out as angels to minister to the needs of the discouraged, to strengthen the faint and perfect the character of every believing child of God. May they also incite a hunger of heart in them who know Him not.

CHARLES I. FITZGEORGE.

Beverly, N. J.

TESTIMONIALS

For twenty years I have considered Dr. Bolton one of the truly great preachers of this country. I have heard them all on this side and many from the other side of the "great waters," but I have traveled more miles on one journey to hear Dr. Bolton than I have for any other preacher in America.

Every preacher and layman should have "Victory Assured," the new volume of sermons by this able minister of Jesus Christ. What beautiful periods and strength of utterance and spiritual unction on every page! May heaven bless the wider circulation of these sermons.

Ever yours,

Trenton, N. J.

WILLIAM ALBERT FRYE,

It gives me pleasure to commend these masterly sermons to all who desire to become more Christ-like in character. Dr. Bolton is a great preacher, and these sermons have accomplished untold good. I hope a hundred thousand copies will be sold and read.

Camden, N. J.

HENRY J. ZELLEY.

I learn that the sermons preached by Dr. H. W. Bolton at the last session of our annual Conference are to be published in a volume entitled "Victory Assured." I am delighted. I heard them with great pleasure and profit. Dr. Bolton is a most eloquent and forceful speaker.

Pennsgrove, N. J.

WILLIAM STONE.

For two weeks Rev. H. W. Bolton, D. D., preached in our revival services. His sermons were logical and forceful. His appeals to the unconverted were convincing. A simple announcement that he is to occupy our pulpit would draw a large congregation.

Camden, N. J.

HOLMES F. GRAVATT,
Pastor First M. E. Church.

Dear Dr. Bolton:

We have had great pleasure and profit listening to your sermons. I have no hesitancy in saying they were the best continuous series of sermons I have ever listened to.

Very truly yours,

Camden, N. J.

DR. GEORGE B. WIGHT,
Pastor Fifth Street M. E. Church.

Dedication

*To the Brethren of the New Jersey
Conference with whom I have labored,
these sermons are affectionately dedicated
by their friend and co-laborer.*

CONTENTS

	PAGE
VICTORY ASSURED	9
LAW OF CHRISTIAN SUCCESSION	29
GARMENTS OF STRENGTH AND BEAUTY . . .	45
BIBLE METHOD OF CLEANSING	59
BELIEVING GOD	77
PRESENTING THE CHRIST	93
SONSHIP	III
SATAN'S ADMISSION AND MISTAKE	125
DISPOSING OF ANNOYANCES	141

I

VICTORY ASSURED.

"Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—R. V. PSALM II, 8.

A positive declaration of God's purpose concerning the reign of King Emmanuel. A decree of the outcome of the kingdoms of this world and the mission of Jesus as the Columbus of the soul in the interests of immortality. Its universality is like God, for

"There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea,
There's a kindness in his justice
Which is more than liberty.

"If our love were but more simple
We should take him at his word."

It is a word from the Commander-in-Chief. Were it from a subordinate we might question the possibility of its fulfilment, but God speaks and all who know Him and His resources are silenced: for He is looking out over the fields from the observatory of an eternal now. To Him a thousand years are as a day and a day as a thousand years. When He promised His Son the nations for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, the angelic reapers were coming

home with the trophies of the ages and the choirs were chanting the harvest home. Yea, the Saints were putting on their robes of light to shine forth in the kingdom of their Father. Ah, thank God; we have left the house of clay with its limitations; we no longer take our reckoning from human outlooks, but from God's house, for he has come who takes the things of God and revealeth them unto (or into) us.

To us it has been a long time since the artist stood in a crude studio, leaning up against an unsightly block of marble, refusing to be interested in anything save the angel he saw within it, but which was invisible to all others. But it has been a much longer stretch of discipline since Jesus stood amid the hills of Galilee to transform the sinful and vulgar, blind and unbelieving, rebellious and palsied, into devout and loyal, believing and hopeful sons and daughters of the Lord Jehovah. But he threw his heart and life into the work, sidetracked death, opened the immortal door, was seen of angels, preached unto men, believed on in the earth, was received up into heaven and gave gifts unto men.

Faith is our only evidence of the fulfilment of this great promise and decree. We see one billion five hundred millions of men, women and children in the darkness, ignorant of our Jesus and their Saviour, ignorant of the new life that has come to us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. We count our forces and they are less

than two hundred and fifty millions of Christians and two hundred and thirty millions of Roman Christians, and with these we are to meet that great dark world. And worse, many of our army are full of unbelief and more are indifferent. There are men and women who verily believe that all the hypocrisy and mischief of the ages is in the Church, and with Ahab they cry, "Hast thou found me, Oh, mine enemy?" In this I think they are honest, for we have to-night to think that of the Church membership. We thoughtlessly criticise the ministry and laity before our children until they come to think them worse than the unconverted, and unchurched. A gentleman in Houlton, Maine, whom it was my privilege to minister unto, told me that his father wrung from him a promise not to have anything to do with Christians or the religion of Christ. Why? Because some man professing to be a Christian had wronged him in business. But these are the things which are seen! Down deep in the heart of the most vile and desperately wicked wretch on earth is an unrest that is sighing for God. China and Japan, India and Africa, Mexico and South America, Bulgaria and the isles of the sea are saying, "Who will show us good?" Men and women are rushing along the banks of the rivers hoping to hear some John the Baptist say, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." Men are not looking for some easy way of life as in other days. They are looking after

something worthy of sacrifice. The heroism of old lives again. "Show us good" is the cry. The great reformers did not, do not, appeal to sentimentalities, but to the heroism of the needy. Go gain the confidence of the vilest. He will tell you that he loathes the life he is living, although he still goes on. He is ashamed of himself, and his deeds, but continues in the business. The dial does not always indicate the purpose of the spring. Back of this work you and I are doing is the eternal purpose of Him who knows the measure of human possibilities. Science and art have never surprised our Commander. To Him, man was His Father's masterpiece, and possible companion. He knew that His Father passed man the pen and compass when creation was finished. Because of this the wealth of the world is gathering around the cross and into a few hands, where God can lay hold on it in times of human emergencies.

How can this promise be fulfilled? How can we overcome the enmity of men and subdue the earth? I do not know. That is not the only thing I do not know. If you had come to me when I was a boy hunting cows by night in the swamps of Maine, told me that I should live long enough to see the electric light make night more brilliant than day, I should have asked with the feeling I now ask, "How can it be?" I don't know how the billions of men, women and children, who have never heard of Jesus, are to be converted and baptized into His

faith, and join the celebration of His birth. I do not know how God turns darkness into day without cog or wheel, sound or clash; but He knows, and some beautiful morning I am going out with Him and see Him do it. It is a great privilege to stand now beneath the paling stars and watch the heralding of the dawn and the coming of the King of day; to feel the dampness of the atmosphere melt into delicious comfort, while birds break the silence of the morning. Please show me how it is done? Tell me, ye men of culture, how my Father accomplishes so much in so short a time. Tell me how my brother took such hold on the science of growth, formulation of thought, and forces of the soul. I do not know. But one thing I do know. God has sent His Ambassador, and declared: "I shall give Jesus the nations of this world and the uttermost parts of the earth" for His own, and that by the simple presentation of the Gospel. We are not out here at our own risk and expense. We are sent as Christ was sent. How often I have gone out into the wild desert to hear Israel mumur and complain; to ask Moses how he expected to feed the caravan without a harvest; to clothe the people without a factory and wonder at his self-composure, for he always seemed to me to be as unmoved as yonder sentinel of the north. "Oh, how dare you expose yourself to the freaks of that ignorant people?" "Ah, sir, I was sent out here. My com-

mission bears the signature of the King. It was signed in the court of King Immanuel."

Seek an interview with the Apostle Paul, as he comes up out of the sea; wet, cold and hungry, friendless, bruised, ready to die. Ask him if he has not made a mistake; if it would not have been better for him, had he accepted honors at the hand of the Jewish nation, and he will say: "Sir, I was called to be an apostle; I was separated unto the Gospel of God, sent to the Gentile world with a message of life. My mission is larger than my life. Hence, none of these things move me. Neither count I my life dear unto myself so that I may finish my course with joy and the ministry that I have received of the Lord Jesus." With this key you may read the history wrought by the heralds of truth in a new light. When a man feels that he is sent of God he dares to do, give or be. It enabled Luther to face the whole Roman church and declare the truth of God. Wicliffe to give his body to be burned at the stake and martyrs in all lands to rejoice in the midst of the flames as messengers of Jehovah. Such confidence knows no limit, when intelligently exercised. Suppose a modern scoffer had met the angel en route from Jerusalem, with orders to release Peter from the penitentiary and had said, "Whither goest thou?" "To Jerusalem." "For what purpose?" "To release God's servant now in prison, sir." "But the gates are closed and barred." "Yes; but God sent me." "Well, there

are sixteen soldiers on guard before the great iron gates and, beside, Peter is bound with chains between two soldiers." "Yes, but you err, not knowing the power of God. My commission bears the signature of the Eternal King, who is the author of all law. I go to release him upon the authority of the King of Kings." What avails the whimpering of scoffers when a man feels that God sent him.

By the law of thought and conviction are we sent. By it we have the printing press, and engine, electric light and telephone, school and church, home and Bethel; by it all these things left the chamber of thought and dreamland for work. Archimedes, when he secured the secret of Nero's crown, went into the streets crying, "Eureka, Eureka!" When Galileo learned that the earth was in motion he went out to tell it, and his announcement shook the hoary institutions and thrones, and brought down upon his head the curse of the Church; but still he heralded the fact. By this law the Gospel of Jesus is spreading over the earth. Who can estimate the influence of sanctified manhood, womanhood or of home? There are some things we can measure and test. You can test the power of an engine or measure the brilliancy of an electric light; but who shall measure the influence of a pure, cultured life surcharged by the energy of the Holy Ghost? Saul of Tarsus tarried with Jesus in sight of Hermon until the thunders of Sinai were hushed, the tears of Calvary were dried and Hermon paled and life broke

over the cities of the dead. Life and immortality were brought to light and glory shone all around—Jewish theocracy melted, Grecian culture limped, and the Roman courts worshipped him in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. Paul cannot be silenced. As soon bid the tides to stay or the sun to cease its shining as to tell such a messenger to be still.

When the disciples saw Jesus, the Risen Christ, they went everywhere heralding the good news; for to them it meant a larger life, purer manhood for all mankind. Sin and death opposed. Persecuted and imprisoned, still they went, saying, "Christ is risen from the dead, and hath power on earth to save men." For the Lord Jehovah was with them. Hell took out many injunctions, only to be overruled by the power of an indwelling Christ, for when He takes possession of a man, that man becomes as a voice crying in the wilderness of men, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord"—"Behold, the Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world!" You can never silence him. As soon attempt to padlock the opening lips of an earthquake. Oh, I am so glad that Saul stayed with Jesus until his eyes were opened and he felt the burning flow of the blood directed by him who leads into all truth. He could say with Peter in his fishing coat, with John in his mantle of love, with Matthew the publican: "The words we speak are not ours, but His who sent us." They won such victories as the world has never seen;

they struck the shackles off the limbs and minds of the millions; shook the thrones of the despots and marched into the centers of life with majestic step and kingly power. They went everywhere preaching a free, full and eternal salvation. The priests raged, Jewish ceremonies sank between the simple doctrine of Jesus, the Christ. The Gentile nations flocked to the standard of Immanuel, until proud Pagan mythology, stripped of its delusive grandeur, stood exposed, a gloomy sepulchre, full of dead memories. Philosophy was conquered and the message of heaven was told in the palaces of Rome. Men went, and are going everywhere, telling the simple story of Jesus and His Gospel.

When the successors of those men who went to heaven from the grass-plots and hilltops of Europe, lighted by the torch of persecution, launched their ships for these shores, they were favored with fair winds, and Jesus calmed their storms and hastened their coming. They found the fields white for harvest and began the work of publishing the truth, which, like fire among stubble, cleared the woods, ran along the banks of rivers, crossed the northern lakes, penetrated the southern swamps, defied the frosts of Canada, scaled the Allegheny heights and swept the coasts of this new world until men no longer wondered why the Wesleys, Whitfield, Asbury, Boardman and Finley came to leave home and comfort, for sacrifice and toil in foreign lands. But it was only the manifestation of the Christ spirit,

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” This is a plain, unmistakable and unrepealed command of our Lord and Saviour. It is in force to-day. It includes all the living members on earth and was given in the interest of all men everywhere.

Philanthropists and utilitarians may wonder, as they view the fields over, why they are covered with happy hearts, joyous converts; why thousands and thousands of Africa's sons are worshipping our God; why Indian tribes bow down in peace before Jesus as their Saviour; why the dark continent is streaked with light from the uplifted Son of God. But we do not. Oh, no! Livingston, Butler, Thoburn, Taylor and Hartzell have heard and obeyed the command: Go preach the Gospel—not Matthew's, Mark's, Luke's or John's; but the good news of Jesus the Christ. The journals of the celebrated Charles R. Darwin tell us that he made a tour of the world in 1832, and on a distant coast he found a people who were unapproachable barbarians. To him they were beyond redemption. They had reached an ebb where philanthropy, science and religion could never send an advocate or have any power. But in the same year God was preparing a boy for that conflict, one Thomas Bridges, a waif, found between the bridges on Thomas street, in Bristol, England. Having no name, they christened him Thomas Bridges. When he had finished his schooling, he asked to be sent to that benighted,

barbarous people. The church hesitated, but he entreated and finally prevailed. He translated the Bible into their language and began to tell that people of the Commander-in-Chief and the tribe was won. England, formerly afraid to land her ships at their shores, now opened up communications, and even Darwin became a patron of that work.

Again, we are sent with a gospel that, given a fair chance, is more than a match for any people under the most adverse circumstances. It is the pure, simple gospel of Jesus this world needs. I read a sermon a few months ago in which the minister labored for an hour to prove that the writer had made a mistake in the interpretation of some non-essential word. I suppose the audience was greatly interested to know that the fathers had made a mistake, but I cannot see how they were edified, except it be that they had a minister sufficiently bright and learned to detect and show up the mistakes of other men. But to my mind there never was an hour when the wor'd needed an intelligent, enthusiastic presentation of the Gospel more than it does to-day. The fathers were successful and their success largely grew out of the fact they believed in the Gospel of the Son of God, and enthusiastically preached it, as the only hope for lost humanity.

Dr. Hall once said, "A house-going ministry will make a church-going people." That depends upon the samples you take. The world demands a helpful, cheer-creating and joy-possessioning type of Chris-

tianity, and he or she who goes from house to house with morose, sad, pessimistic utterances to fill the place with criticism about the ministry and government of the Church, faults of the church people and want of old-time loyalty will drive the people from the church into the camps established and supported by disaffected, back-slidden, discouraged and disheartened men and women of Christian parentage. Men and women everywhere are sighing for the touch of a compassionate Spirit, that will lift them within the reach of their immortal yearnings, and Christ alone can answer that demand. None can compete with Him in revealing the compassionate nature of God, and the way into His presence. He is the way, the only way ordained of God, and given power to sympathize with us by a body prepared for Him. He is, therefore, the life and the way into it.

Mohamet with his 200,000,000 followers is without sympathy or compassion. He proclaims a cast-iron fate, before which stolid resignation is demanded and the tired heart revolts. Buddha, with his 340,000,000 professors has no God. His system is based on Atheism, fragmentary and incomplete; man can never be satisfied without knowledge of God and His compassion. Hindooism with its 330,000,000 devotees has no personal God; the Temples of Confucius are as cold as the grave and as silent as death. 'Tis true Confucious gives a morality, but not a life of love and compassion.

Have you ever read Mr. Shaw's story of the poor old man who was dying? "I went to him and I talked to him about Jesus and His love and power to save and His wonderful grace to keep. He was very respectful, surprisingly respectful under those conditions; but I saw I wasn't gripping the man's heart, that I had not said the right word. Then the Holy Spirit whispered to me, 'Present Jesus to him as the pilot's Pilot.' Then I stepped a little nearer his bed, took his great muscular, clammy hand, already beginning to get cold in death, and said, 'Now, my dear man, how many times when you have been piloting that steamer of yours, the only thing that has kept her off the rocks has been your clear eye and your steady nerve. Now you are in the strait of death, and the current is running against you, the fog is on and you need a pilot. Jesus is the pilot's Pilot. Won't you take Him on board?' He gathered up what proved afterward to be his dying strength, and answered with an 'I will!' that could be heard all through the little apartment. Just as he was dying, I started the familiar Gospel hymn, in which the family joined—

"Jesus, Saviour, pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rock and treacherous shoal;
Chart and compass come from thee;
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me."

The old man died. When they brought him into the church two days afterward for his funeral, I

stepped to the edge of the platform to commit his body to the ground. I saw a light on his face "which never was on sea or land," and the old man out of the kindliness of his face seemed to be saying with a redeemed voice, "I met my Pilot face to face, and He brought me safely into port." That is the kind of preaching this old world needs just now, and with it God is going to save the people of the earth. Thanks be unto God we have the same gospel that burned in the bones of the Psalmist, reconstructed the kingdom of Israel in the days of Josiah, illuminated the temple, shone on Hermon, wept in the garden, preached on the cross, broke through and opened the tomb, nailed the thesis to the door in Wittenberg by the hand of Luther, shook Scotland in the prayers of John Knox, brought the Wesleys and the Moravian brothers across the sea, and is the power of God unto salvation to-day. God help us to get where He can use us.

Some years ago a poor soldier, worn out in his country's service, took to the violin to earn his living. He was found playing in the streets of Vienna, but after awhile his hand became feeble and tremulous, and he could make no more music. One day while he sat there weeping, a man passed along and said: "My friend, you are too old and feeble; give me your violin." He took the man's violin and began to discourse most exquisite music. The coin came in and in, until the hat was full. "Now," said the musician, "put that money in your

pocket." He held his hat again and the violinist played more sweetly than ever, until some of the people wept and some shouted. Again the hat was filled. The violinist at last dropped the instrument and passed on. The whisper went, "Who is it? Who is it?" Some one just entering the crowd said: "Why, that is Bucher, the great violinist." Bucher had taken that old man's place and assumed his livelihood, and made sacrifice for him. So the Lord Jesus Christ came down to find us in spiritual penury, and across the broken strings of His own great heart He strikes a strain of infinite music, which wins the attention of earth and heaven. He takes our poverty. He plays our music. He weeps our sorrow. He dies our death, as a sacrifice for us. It helps when all else fails. There can never be a successful substitute for this Gospel.

There is a legend that tells of a harp left in an old baronial castle. It was a most wonderful instrument, but, through years of disuse, had gathered rust, until the strings had lost their flexibility and would not respond to the touch of the most skillful artists. Many experts tried in vain to repair it. At last the man who made the instrument came that way, and on entering the castle saw at once what was needed. He freed the strings and wires of their encumbrances, retuned and readjusted the instrument until the old-time sweetness was more than regained. He knew the nature of the instrument, and could see just what neglect had done for

it. So he, who created, tempered and housed these spirits, so long bruised and dimmed, knows how to remove the sins, restore the image and return the life, and send men and women out as Jesus went to die for lost men. Thousands of our best educated, best environed young men and women are offering themselves for the darkest corners of the earth, as heralds of the truth. Intelligent, wealthy men and women are leaving home, luxury, friends and comforts, for Jesus and His cause to serve; but in this is not to be found the basis of largest hope. Nay, the unwritten and unwriteable Gospel is doing a work that cannot be measured, or reported in work, or tables of figures. There is power in the presence of a man who has left all to go as a native preacher. He may have more devotion than the missionary, but he cannot have the same power, for the people to whom he goes cannot understand how men leave home, friendships and civilizations to preach unto them. This is the missionaries' power.

But far above all evidence, indication or sign God has said, "I will give you this world," and He has never failed nor identified himself with a failing mission, and in this is my abiding confidence. Look to our great commander. He giveth us the victory.

I have read a story of Luther, whose faith once astonished men and angels, and whose words shook the German hills, falling into depression. He be-

came utterly discouraged; things seemed to turn against him. Entering his home, he sat down to weep and lament his sad condition; tears rolled down his cheeks, and he turned to Catharine, his wife, who, having wrapped her form in black robes, was weeping most bitterly. As he saw her tears and black form he said: "Oh, Kate, what is the matter? Is your babe dead?" "No, it is worse than that, husband." "Tell me the worst, tell me the worst," said Luther. "Why," said Catharine, "our Heavenly Father is dead, and therefore His cause in the earth is overturned." Martin Luther stood up and in a moment burst into a happy laugh. "I see," said the great man, "what a fool I have been. God is not dead, but I have acted as though He were." Would to God that all His saints might learn the lesson taught Luther, for, filled with the conception of the Infinite Father and the inexhaustible supplies at our disposal, we may fly with the angel of the morning over mountains and seas, across plains and through swamps, like the birds of paradise. We ought to fill this world with the sunshine and joy of eternal hope, for our God is clothed with might.

"The winds obey His voice;
His voice sublime is heard afar;
In distant peals it dies;
He yokes the whirlwind to His car
And sweeps the howling skies.

Ye sons of earth in reverence bend;
Ye nations wait His word

And bid the choral song ascend
To celebrate our God."

Our first duty is to accept by faith the fact that He who knows says, It shall be done. He has given orders to take possession of the heathen for His Son, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. Let mortals accept it. Some years ago the question of the union of the States was debatable, but there was a man at the helm who decided that the Union must be preserved at all cost, and the minute that decision was adopted by the North, the Civil War was practically ended. At least the question was no longer debatable.

So with the war of sin. When the followers of Jesus cease to question and believe God, not simply "in" God, but drop out the preposition and believe God, we shall be looking and planning for results. I once accompanied a man of God to a large auditorium. I recall my feelings as he set about at once to arrange for the coming of sinners to the altar. I questioned the wisdom of such a move, but his brethren said: "They'll come." I felt that he was giving every unsaved person in the congregation an opportunity to fortify himself against the the truth, but God honored the expectancy of his servant, and a score of strong men and women were gloriously saved at that service.

Some months ago a ship was stranded off the coast of California. The life-saving crew had done their utmost to rescue the men, and on returning

the last time, exhausted and ready to fall, they were asked if they had gotten all. "All save one, was the reply." Then a look of deep anxiety was passed round, when a young man sprang to the front, saying, "I will go if others will help." His mother embraced him and said, "My son, you are my all. Your father went down at sea, and your brother Will went out more than a year ago and has not been heard from." "Yes, mother, but I should not be worthy of my sire did I not do my best to save that dying man." "Go, my son." The boat was launched, an hour of earnest struggle followed, and the wreck was reached once more; the poor man was lowered into the boat. Then followed the hardest struggle amid the angry waves. The boat goes down, but rises over the swelling waves, until a voice is heard asking, "Did you save him?" "Yes, and tell mother 'tis brother Will."

Thank God there are thousands of our best educated, best environed young men and women offering themselves for the darkest corners of the earth, as heralds of the truth. Intelligent, wealthy men and women are leaving home, luxury, friends and comforts to serve Jesus and His cause. In this may be found the basis of largest hope. Yea, the unwritten and unwriteable Gospel is doing a work that cannot be measured, or reported in work, or tables of figures; with Paul of old, let men decide to know Jesus only and preach Him to all mankind.

II

LAW OF CHRISTIAN SUCCESSION.

"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth."—Psalm 45:16.

This passage of Scripture has been greatly perverted by the students of the Bible. Many have assumed that it had reference to the wedding of Solomon and the Queen of Egypt, and there is much in the language and figures used to suggest that thought. There is and always has been good and gracious gifts from the union of wealth and wisdom. Solomon, King of Israel, did distribute many valuable gifts after his wedding to the Queen of Egypt, but there were no princes from that union. Rehoboam was the only prince in Solomon's family, and he was not of that union.

Others have studied the prophecy in the light of Jesus' wedding; when on the heights of Mount Zion He shall take to Himself the church and lead her forth without spot or wrinkle over the plains of heaven, after the last angel gets home with the youngest member of the family. Then will Jesus take to himself His bride, clad in white robes, all pure within and adorned with the jewelry of the King. This poetic description has much to interest men, but the princes are to reign in this world—

right here, before the bells of heaven begin the wedding march of Immanuel. But when Jesus took to Himself the nature of man, and when divinity and humanity was made perfect through suffering, princes were born to exercise power with God and among men in all the earth, and so long as that union is maintained princes will appear with power all divine and the heathen shall be given unto our King for an inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth shall be possessed by Him.

What, then, are the lessons of the text? First—the fathers must go. We must expect that when they have accomplished their work, be they counselors or warriors, prophets or priests. They are to be advanced. Persia had her Cyrus, Greece had her Alexander, Phidias, Socrates and Pericles; Rome her Caesar, Cicero and Augustus; France had her Napoleons and Philips; England her Nelson, Cromwell and Gladstone; America her Washington and Lincoln and Grant and McKinley—but they are all gone. To the casual reader this is wrong. It looks like a mistake. We repeat the old query: Why? Why should a man grow old and disappear when he has acquired his princely powers and the world needs him so much? But the universality of this law forbids criticism. The Great Executive must have some purpose in it, for the same law prevails in all kingdoms. The fields so rich in the expressions of life and forms of beauty, the brooks so full of music, the forests so rich in

foliage and the vineyards, orchards and gardens promise so much in harvest that we would keep them as they are alway; but they are not here to stay. Soon the autumnal winds will blow and desolation follow. Go walk through the fields to-day, and field and forest, so full of life and music yesterday, are leafless and barren. The birds had returned, the flowers blossomed, the brooks were melodious, but, alas! how quickly they went, and our hills are as barren, our forests as voiceless as the pole is bare, as though they had not been. In all this we see the wisdom of God. They went in view of increasing beauty and power, life and glory. Had they lingered earth's carpet would have worn out, become dusty and unsightly; the flowers faded, the orchards fruitless. "As the days of the tree are the days of my people, saith the Lord." But in the going of men there is more than the fact of going, for they take with them largely the skill, experience brought them. Their successors may be near, but must acquire skill as their predecessors did. When Elijah went home in his chariot of fire the people were conscious of having lost much that was not to be found in Elisha, hence the cry,

"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof, we see them no more.

This is the feeling of all who are interested in the unfolding of God's plans. You remember how you felt when you first read of Moses' removal. In him Israel moved and had their being. Eighty

years were spent in fitting him for a work you felt he was not permitted to perform. From our standpoint he was removed at a time when God's people needed him more than at any time in his whole life, but he went and another took his place. There was a moment in the history of this people when millions cried, "Let me die in his stead." We could not see how this nation could go on without Mr. Lincoln at that time. In both cases their successors were not the men we would have placed in authority. Joshua was a good man (said Israel), but he was without experience. And we tried to think Johnson would do, but his life is written, and we live as a nation; and God is fulfilling His prophecy, proving to the world that the destiny of men and nations are with Him.

Once in four years one-half of this great Republic spends money, time and energy to prove that unless a change comes the nation will go to destruction; while the other half, with equal earnestness, assert that if there is a change we must perish. Changes occur, but we go on, with here and there a little ripple. Great men die; others become demented and childish, but the nation lives; and may there not be another side to this picture or tapestry woven for some floor we have never yet seen? We allow ourselves to think that there is great danger in these sudden and radical changes; their importance to us is very great because we are confined to local effects, to the loss of friendship, and that experience and

counsel which is so important in the running of the interests known to us, forgetting all about the wider sweep and the more general good that is to come to the race. We question the removal of the fathers without the ability to transfer their skill and give to others the benefit of their experience, but God in running this world is not looking alone to the interests of the United States or to the results made manifest in time, but to the broader interests of the nations of the earth and the endless harvest, when the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into everlasting habitations on high. We can see that this law brings good to those who go, for if our conception of the Christian's exit be correct, there is an enlargement of his horizon, a broader sweep given to his influence and a grander world of opportunities in which to operate with enriched experiences and agencies.

Here Paul ministered to a few hundred, but on taking his departure his utterances were gathered into epistles, and to-day he speaks to millions where once he spake to individuals, and his influence for good is increasing continually. Handel sat at an organ in a cathedral to finger the forte in the presence of a few admirers. Now his Easter anthem, "Hallelujah Chorus," "Israel in Egypt," "Samson in Blindness" and others are ringing throughout the ages. The melody and harmony of his great soul is an inspiration to the millions who are seeking to reproduce the Christ life among men. God's

purpose is that of good to the greatest number of persons in all lands and ages. Hence He has problems awaiting us as we advance. The going up into the higher grades makes for our glory in assuming the responsibilities they bring. God knows what He is fitting us for and what lessons we need to learn. Did you ever know of a man, woman or nation developing any strength or influence without being made responsible for some interest or principle. We must learn to make, build, rule or reign by experience. Nay, in all this there is gain both to those who go and their successors.

Secondly—We have a positive statement, "Shall be the children." Such a statement is of infinite value, both to the retiring and the witnessing. To the believing this brings rest. The future is not to be measured by visions and senses, for this pledge passes beyond appearances, signs and circumstances into the verities of Jehovah.

Circumstances may throw the law from its wonted course, and cause it to produce unwonted work, or fail to accomplish any work, yet God holds the train of events and His promise is the mainspring, unbroken, unbiased and unmoved.

You may have seen a tree clinging to a rock robed in ice. As you looked you felt how impossible that this tree should bear fruit. There is no earth on its roots, no foliage on its limbs, sap or appearance of life in its trunk. It is dead and buried in ice. But you were hasty and possibly false.

The promise does not depend upon appearances. Did the roots of that tree reach means of supply? Will the sun return this way? If, so the ice will melt, the late grown twigs will bud and blossom and even fruit may hang where icicles now sparkle in the frost. So in the study of this prophecy we can go back of the things which are seen, back of ministry and organizations, to the demands and promise of supply, remembering always that the things which are seen are temporal, while those things which are not seen are eternal.

The hands may catch on the dial and fail to indicate the movement or report the time, but God is moving on and with accelerated movement He reaches out daily to set events and give time to all things, for His purpose is everlastingly sure and in His promises His people may rejoice in hope of endless triumph. Herein is our hope: When Abraham died his faith lived; when Elijah went up Elisha took his mantle and with it parted the Jordan; if the ark falls into the hands of strangers God is sure to send for it and bring it back; while His church is on the sea of changes Christ is at the helm, and heaven and home are at the masthead, for "instead of the fathers shall be the sons."

We are apt to think the sons are not equal to the fathers. Where are the Otises, Adamses, Madisons, Jeffersons, Randolphs, Harrisons, Franklins and Washingtons of Colonial days? Where are the Chases, Grants, Shermans, Sheridans, Stantons,

McPhersons, Thomases, Logans, Garfields, McKinnleys and Lincolns of the sixties? Where? If the demands were on us that were on the people in Colonial days or in the days of our civil war there would be no lack. They confronted problems unlike those of to-day. Their problem was slavery. We call for men who can sweep a fleet from the seas without the loss of a man; to take a well-fortified city without firing a gun. These are days that alarm little men, and some men whose counsel was sought in other days are passed by to-day. Ours is a world-wide conquest now. The question to-day is not: "Do we need Cuba and the islands of the sea?" but "do they need us?"—not do they want us, but do they need us. The North American Indian did not want our Pilgrim fathers, but most men believe their coming was of God and for the good of the world and the opening of the gates for the expansion of American civilization is as much the movement of the divine as any movement of the past.

Our sons have come to the dawning of a new day in the history of the race, and none were ever more loyal and patriotic than the children of the twentieth century in America. The life that bounds in them comes to us out of a glorious past. It brings to the nation the wisdom of the wise, the wealth of the ages, with possibilities of immeasurable gain. Our resources are attracting the whole world, while men who loan money are hastening to our

shores, in order to avail themselves of the wealth we offer. It is said, upon good authority, that our soil, this side of the Alaskas, would feed a billion of people, and if we turn our attention to the wealth beneath the soil the last ten years have produced millions of dollars' worth of metal. Truly has Matthew Arnold said: "America holds the future." And to our children this law means more than to any kingdom or age.

The waves of the sea roll, dash and break on the rockbound shore, breastwork or breakwater as of old as their predecessors did. The glorious gifts of summer that enrich our fields and orchards yield to the blasts of winter and leave the poles as bare and cheerless as before, but we may avail ourselves of the experience and achievements of the fathers, if, with the spirit of Sergeant Carney, we seize the flag and enter the conflict where the fathers leave it and rush on to victory. Every one I address this hour may step upon the shoulders of his predecessor and look beyond the mountains and clouds that hinder his vision, or enter into battle on the eve of ultimate victory because of the warrior's experience. This was the faith which enabled Abram to see a nation rising out of the ashes of his only son. To march from Mount Moriah to Mt. Zion with songs of triumph and everlasting joy. It enabled Joshua to shout through the walls of Jericho, and the boys in blue to climb the heights of Mt.

Lookout and see victory in the sunset of apparent failure.

For the sons some things have been forever settled. No anarchy can ever be rooted or widespread among the American people. Its hold is broken. Its day is past. It had a fair chance in the city of Chicago to appeal to the curiosity, sympathy and patronage of a million and a half people, and failed. When I came into possession of that fact my fears in reference to its hold were forever dismissed. No; we are a religious people and so perfect is the liberation of the soul along these lines as to demand churches and schoolhouses everywhere. When you stop to consider the significance of this one fact—that by voluntary offerings we are building eleven churches a day; that is, a church for every working hour and one to spare in this Republic. The future has a brighter outlook than has been visible at any other period. Thirty years ago a celebrated blasphemer began his cry against the Bible and the church—twenty thousand churches have been built since then, and he was not able to overthrow the humblest altar on the farthest frontier. Again, the great questions in constitutional law have all been forever settled.

The most important thought contained in the text is in the last clause: "Whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. First, the children are here.

"Ah, what would be the world to us
If the children were no more?"

We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air and food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood.

That to the world are children,
Through them it feels the glow,
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children,
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said,
For ye are the living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

Yes, I know there are stains on my carpet,
The traces of small, muddy boots;
And I see your fair tapestry glowing,
All spotless with blossoms and fruits.

Yes, I know there are four little bedsides,
Where I must stand watchful each night,
While you go out in your carriage,
And flash in your dresses so bright.

No, keep your fair home with its order,
Its freedom from bother and noise
And keep your own fanciful leisure,
But give me my four splendid boys."

It is God's plan and purpose to make us princes
by inheritance, but some get so engrossed in busi-

ness as not to develop the talent of their own children, and hence their business, honor and glory is transferred to other hands. I once came from a funeral service leaning on the arm of the city marshal. He remarked to me: "That was a very sad case." I answered: "No; for those seven men were all sons of this man." "Yes." "Are they not equal to the father in every sense?" "Yes." "Was he not a true American and a Christian?" "Yes." "I wish every Christian American citizen could multiply himself by seven." He had lived well. The possibility of princes in all the earth is yours. Did it ever occur to you that another may take and wear the crown and honor for which your fathers fought, and to which you are rightfully entitled? But be assured if, like Hophni and Phineas, you are not prepared to do the work and receive the honor God will call some Samual to take your place. Fathers, mothers, have you thought about leaving your offspring to manage your business and wear your honor? The responsibility for the future is great. If our sons are to succeed in the years before us they must be robust and well-trained and equipped. Remember, a well-equipped mind in a frail body is like a great engine in a rickety old mill. You dare not start it for fear it will jar the building down.

Again, the intellect must be trained rather than loaded. In Northfield there is an old house where five children were educated by a mother, left by the

death of her companion with seven children to care for and educate. At every meal Scripture was recited by every member of the family, daily prayers were offered in that home. Soon one of those boys was led away to sea; voyage after voyage was made without returning home. The boy had become a man. Daily the mother prayed for her son. One day there appeared a stalwart frame before the door with bowed head, fearing lest his mother was dead. He turned and walked away to the churchyard to see if she was there, but returned to be greeted by the welcome voice: "Come in; come in!" "No! no! not until my mother forgives me," was sobbed out. The lessons of home had not been lost. That woman's name was Mrs. Moody—D. L. Moody's mother, who lived to pray for her son in his great work.

The cry is for entertainment, and the danger is in trying to make that which is instructive and helpful so entertaining that brilliancy becomes the price of life. In 1812 a ship was set on fire and loosened from its moorings a few miles above the Niagara Falls. The night was dark and as that burning ship floated down the river, all on fire, it presented a very brilliant and entertaining scene for the mischievous boys, but to the men who had invested their all in preparing the ship for sea it was not so entertaining. So, to the young and thoughtless, there is entertainment and brilliancy associated with dissipation, often securing a following that is coveted;

but what is it to the father and mother whose lives have been poured out in preparing that son or daughter for usefulness? May not angels weep while others are amused over genius on fire with passion?

Life's problem is to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. To do that we must become princes. God crowns with princely power all who surrender. The wrestling and agony of Jacob was in getting to the point of surrender. Peace came when General Lee surrendered. So is it when a heart surrenders to Christ. Jacob's first prayer was for help to do something himself. Had it been answered it would have led to slaughter. The wise engineer does not increase the power of an engine when it is off the track. You do not give the wayward boy more money with which to increase his misery. Death to sin is necessary in order for life to God. Jacob must suffer the crucifixion of self in order to become a prince, and so must you. Moses took on the halo of the crown when in Sinai he saw his weaknesses in becoming angry and breaking the tables on which God had written his law. Abram walked in the friendship of Jehovah when he was able to trust God without the visible presence and was ready to offer Isaac on God's altar. Even Jesus could not make known the glory of the resurrection and the glorification of the saints until personally He surrendered to death and walked forth in robes of victory. Perfect rest and undisturbed confidence was

reached by Jacob when all things visible had faded and the human strength gave way to weakness. The apostles found the key of power when all forms were called in. When the hills were dusty and barren hunger called forth those flashes of divinity that led the people to cry: "Behold the Messiah!" And to-day all development, growth of power and achievements in the religious world is along this line. Oh, for a cyclone from heaven, to break these self-constructed barriers that now shut us out from God, then we might go up into the Alpine heights of Christian joy to be forever with the Lord.

Fathers, if you have done your best for those who are to succeed you, you may go confidently to your reward, for one of the two pictures will certainly follow.

There is an old legend of the White Hand. There was a king who glorified not in pomp or power, but in deeds of love. He scattered gifts for the poor. One day a bishop seized his hand and blessed it, saying: "May this fair hand, this bounteous hand, never grow old." That king was slain in battle, and as the custom was, his limbs were taken off and exposed to public gaze, and long after all the rest had perished that hand remained unchanged, pointing upward toward heaven. Jesus may be to every home that hand, constantly ministering unselfish devotion, and will remain pure and white in the heaven of glory after earthly honors have faded and crown and jewels have perished.

There is another picture in which mother appears asleep at the wheel, while angels come to fan her brow, cool the weary head and gather up the half-finished work to complete it. Old, yet true to the faithful ones. What we cannot do angels, who are our ministers, will finish. The angel who came when Peter, John and James slept, will come when weariness overcomes.

III

GARMENTS OF STRENGTH AND BEAUTY.

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, and thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem."—Isaiah 52: 1.

The one all-prevailing, all-consuming evil of the ages has been and is indifference. Indifference to evil and crime. Indifference to personal responsibility for its presence and reign. When the prophet was awakened from his dreams and had a vision of the possibilities in the economy of God for Israel, he cried as one awakening from a deep sleep or escaping from the snare of a subtle enemy: "Awake from thy weakness and unsightliness."

If I am not mistaken, that is the great danger of this day in our own beloved land. It is not that our people have become reckless and profane. No; our sons are better than we were. There were wicked men and women, evil plans and devices, in our days. Good men and women were vigilant and untiring in their works of love, but no more so than those of to-day. Nay; good people when aroused are more humane and self-sacrificing than they ever were in all the history of the race. But we have grown indifferent to the fact of sin and its havoc in our midst. More than one hundred thousand men have died in drunkenness during the year

1905. Over their graves is written, "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven." They passed our doors, and more are on the way. We know it, stagger at the awful fact, but pass on without much effort to lessen the number. If there was a rock in any channel where half as many vessels were wrecked the Government would empty its treasury or double its navy to protect its shipping. The same is true of other interests. Every mail brings tidings of some railroad or coalpit disaster, and we have only time enough to spare to glance over the list of killed and injured to see if any of our immediate friends were among them. Then we buy a ticket over the same road and journey with the same officials in authority as when the disaster occurred. A score of statesmen, educators, commanders and distinguished lecturers have died during 1905. We have reason to believe their style of living shortened their days. And yet we strive hard to live as they lived or become as indifferent as though we had a lease on life forever and were to live in this world eternally. Such indifference robs the best of men and women of that sense of responsibility so indispensable to safety.

Familiarity with crime often robs men of all sense of personal responsibility for its increase. Only a few weeks ago a gentleman of respectability was asked to aid in closing a place of sin and death, but he replied, knowing that the placing of his signature to the remonstrance would close it: "No; I am

not in that business. I am not responsible for their business. I attend to my own affairs. Let them do the same." One week later, as he was on his way to the station to meet his family, the news-dealer's cry, "Wreck—many lives lost!" was heard. It startled him, but he said: "Well, there are many trains on this line. It is not mine." But it was, and in an hour the lifeless forms of wife and daughter were before him, while surgeons were attending the badly injured younger daughter. The engineer of the freight train had visited that very saloon, left it in an intoxicated condition, only to run his train into the oncoming express. This man awoke, then, to the fact that it was his business to aid in removing that institution of ruin. It will be a sad day when men lose sight of the fact that they are personally responsible for the safety of others to the measure of their ability. I am not here to abuse the church. There never was an hour when God's people were more intelligent and spiritual in their relation to Christ. But it is impossible for us to feel as we once felt toward individuals who are off the track or out at sea in a merciless storm. I remember the first time I ever saw an intoxicated man reeling and staggering in his effort to reach home. Oh, that sight! I could not keep the thought of his wife and children from my mind. Now it is an hourly occurrence, and they pass by unnoticed. I know my heart is not less tender. I know I appreciate the conditions of sorrow, home and danger a

thousand times more keenly than then, but were I to give the same attention to each case it would unfit me for anything else. The conditions are all changed. The church and saloon are in the same block; vice and virtue look out of the same window. We are hand-to-hand in our conflicts now and there is but one way out and that is by the development of a generation of men and women who can stand in the presence of sin and not yield to temptation; men and women who can say, as Jesus said: "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." Personally, I think we have been thrashing the old dead leaves from off dead trees and beating about the dens of sin and death with carnal weapons long enough. I believe our only hope is in the law of life in Christ Jesus. What, then, is the strength of the church?

First—The incarnation of truth; God's Word is truth. His entrance giveth light. The light that lighteth every man who cometh into this world is the Word and the Word is God. When He comes in there is light, and sin takes on its heinousness, as in the case of poor Hansen, reported by ex-Attorney General Griggs: Hansen was an unchristianized pagan—an Indian. He was thoroughly regenerated by the entrance of truth. Then he saw things in a new light. Until that time he could chase the deer on Sunday as on other days. He could steal from his neighbor without any sense of condemnation; murder, if need be, to get revenge or gain;

dance on the celebration of the birth of his Lord with the same grace as at the funeral of an enemy. But when truth entered his being how different! Until now his only fear was law. If he could escape the law it was all right for him to do as he pleased; but when converted he saw that he might desire to do things that would wrong others, and that a religious life was the only life worthy of man. "Jim" Hansen had hardly been converted when he sought out the captain of the Salvation Army and bravely confessed to him that he, with ten other Indians, had murdered two whites—a man and a woman—on the Lynn Canal, near Skagway, some months before. He asked for advice, and the captain told him that it was his duty to give himself up to the authorities. Without protest Hansen went to the United States Deputy Marshal and told the story of the crime. The Marshal got together a posse and, guided by Hansen, went to the spot where the murder had been committed. There, under the snow, they found the bodies of Mr. and Mrs. Horton. The crime had been atrocious. Hansen, with his ten accomplices, was indicted and held for trial. His confession and the testimony of the others concerned proved that Hansen himself had shot Horton, while Mrs. Horton was killed by another native. Six of the eleven Indians were convicted. Hansen was sentenced to death; the others were committed to prison for long terms. The young Christian alone made no effort to escape con-

viction. The Judge before whom the case was tried was so impressed by Hansen's nobility that he wrote at length concerning the case to the Honorable John W. Griggs, Attorney General of the United States. Said the Judge: "His (Hansen's) entire conduct during the trial of the other individuals convinced me of the honesty of his confession and the purity of the motives that induced it. That he was moved by high religious fervor there can be no doubt. At the last act of the drama, when I reluctantly passed sentence of death upon him, in answer to the usual question why sentence should not be pronounced upon him, etc., he answered with undaunted heroism, a benignant smile on his face: 'My brother, I have done my duty; now you do yours.' Such rare fortitude I have never witnessed."

Attorney General Griggs recommended to President McKinley that Hansen's sentence be commuted from death to imprisonment for life.

When the Attorney General was questioned as to the correctness of the newspaper reports, he said: "The facts are genuinely correct." No one can read of "Jim" Hansen's moral heroism without receiving a spiritual uplift. Here was a man, degraded, callous, worse than dead to truth and virtue, because he had never known what truth and virtue are. When at the plea of Christian workers he opened his heart to receive the inpourings of the Divine Spirit, a great flood of light came to him and he saw himself more clearly than does many a man

of ten times his degree of civilization. What was given to him in that moment he could not have got from education, from art, from the economic usages of society. In a flash moral responsibility was born in him, and he had the courage to obey the voice of conscience. We honor "Jim" Hansen, Indian savage though he be. His crime has not been mitigated by his confession; it is even well, for the good of society, that he be punished; but the man who stood before the Judge and said: "I have done my duty, now you do yours," is not the man who murdered Mr. Horton. A new man has been born in the body of an old.

That is the only law of safety for home, State or church. "The issues of life are out of the heart." Get the heart right and it will correct the head, but a foul basement will endanger the inmates in the best finished house. A heart that longs to do wickedly will soon find a way to escape the law. Shall we not be as earnest for the education of the heart as for that of the head? Let us insist upon regeneration early in life, so that they may see the heinousness of sin and the beauty of truth. Frank W. Warne, now Bishop of India, tells us this of himself to the honor of his sainted father. When he was about fourteen years of age he was given some special work one evening by his father. It happened that just then some boys came by to play, and instead of doing what he was told, Frank went off to play with them. A little later he met his

father, who inquired, "Have you done what I told you?" The boy answered, "Yes." The father knew that he had told an untruth, but said nothing. The boy felt rather badly about it, but nevertheless soon fell asleep, on going to bed, and slept soundly.

Next forenoon his mother said to him, "Your father slept none all last night." Frank knew that his father was well, and said, "Why didn't he sleep?" His mother said, "He spent the whole night praying for you."

The last sentence was like a bell ringing in Frank Warne's ears, and like an arrow in his heart. He was convicted of sin, and knew no rest until he knew it in the consciousness of pardoned sin. Bishop Warne has always attributed his decision to become a Christian to that night when his father, who was a godly man, kept vigil all night, praying for his boy who had proved untrue. Bishop Warne says to me, "I can never be sufficiently grateful to him for that night of prayer." Surely there is in that sentence from a distinguished and noble public man a good suggestion for many anxious Christian parents.

The entrance of God's Word would change the whole world in its attitude toward sin. Do you know some real respectable men and women do not see much harm in lying. To them the harm is in being found out. "It is only one sin." True, but if you were in a room with ten doors leading out-

ward, how many would you have to pass through in order to be out of the room?

By this we can clearly see that the strength of the church does not consist in numbers. Did it, we might despair, for the majority of adults in this world to-day are indifferent to the call and claims of our God. "I must be excused," is the feeling on the part of many now in the ranks, while others are counting the years and battle before them, and longing for a release even though it be at the hand of death. It is not in material agencies, for it has become easy to estimate the force of guns and ships, powder and dynamite; men can tell how thick to build the fort and ship in order to go unharmed in the presence of guns. We can measure Niagara Falls and the Atlantic's waters, but who shall measure the power of Jehovah's truth? Our hope is not in oratory, sentiment or military strategy. These have been successfully resisted, but truth is eternal and unconquerable in him who is "willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail," which hope was restored unto us by the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour. He is our anchor,

hope the cable that holds in the storm and never faileth. It is strengthened by use. It can never corrode or rust, for it is coiled in purity and works out of a pure heart, hence the one great work of God is to purify unto Himself a peculiar people.

The foundations for the ancient temple were first cleansed of all rubbish accumulations and weaknesses so that the rocks might abide without cement or mortar. So is it with God's living temple. He first cleanses that the rock of truth may remain as the rock of defense within the soul, and on that foundation He builds to abide. In olden times no one was allowed to enter the temple without washing. It was not an uncommon thing to see men who had journeyed for miles cleansing themselves and their robes before entering the courts of the Lord's house. Jesus fulfilled the same law. Of him it was declared: "And the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the angel of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold, he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver." It was for this the Psalmist prayed: "Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and

I shall be whiter than snow." It is declared by our great Teacher, Jesus the Christ: "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." John writes: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Why? Because therein is strength. A pure heart is strong in that it closes at the approach of sin as the rose closes at the coming of dust. It hides within the folds of Jehovah's truth at the approach of evil and we are saved from its belittling and destructive force. None can hope to be strong until cleansed from all irregularities and superfluities. Our God has made no provision for continued babyhood. Sad, indeed, is that heart when first it dawns upon it that the baby boy would never grow in physique, mind or spirit. Ah, in the economy of grace all that we lost in Adam is made possible through salvation in Jesus. The pure in heart grow in knowledge and beauty. Oh, that men would come to see that sweet lovely babe, found of shepherds, in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, grew until he conquered death and robbed that ancient Niagara of its tears, stepped on the stars as rounds in his ladder heavenward and is still growing and will grow to our apprehension eternally. The purest breezes are in the mountain heights and Jesus came that we might have life more abundantly. Out of a pure heart and a good conscience; that is, an intelligent conscience. Intelligence directs faith in its appropriations, hope in its flight, love

in its ministry. Such men will never spend their time writing their names in the dust through which beasts, toads and worms crawl. They will not beat the air and cry for that which it never contained. It will bring a new set of pictures before the imagination; a new hero, even the conqueror, Jesus the King, around whose head thought weaves garlands of beauty and glory.

But secondly: We read, "And thy beautiful garments. Strength and beauty, are not often found in the same thing or persons; but here we are exhorted to put on both. The mountain often lifts its craggy form in the pathway of an army, as a mighty bulwark. It may give birth to murmuring brooks, swelling rivers and be clothed with forests grand and majestic and yet have little or no beauty until the sun shines upon it. The lion in fierceness and power may roam through the forest a terror to man and beast, and yet with the rhinoceros and elephant have no beauty. The nightingale sings loudly and flies without weariness, but you would never think of calling it beautiful. So there are men who know nothing of that grace that beautifies and adorns the Christian. They have strength. Their criticism is often cruel, though correct. They remind you of the hickory limb—so crooked as not to be able to lie still or fit any place. But in God's house there are pillars of strength so beautiful that you know not which word to use in describing them. Boaz and Jachan brazen pillars which were set

up in the porch of the temple, were beautiful beyond description, curiously wrought in chainwork, network, lilywork and pomegranates in rows all of brass, wrought according to the best rules of architectural beauty, and yet in strength so great as to defy description. So ought the church to be great in resources, sympathies, gifts and graces, as never to harm but always to help. Like the olive that lifted its head above the floods, that stood amid the storm and ruin of the wasting world, to offer the flying dove its evergreen leaf in evidence of a hold it had beyond the depths of the floods, so ought the Christian lift his head above the floods of superstition, the smoke and dust of infidelity, with fadeless beauty, for he has a hold on God untouched by the tides of sin. Clad in robes of beauty and strength he may stand unmoved. He has an enlarged vision, a refined nature that defies all opposing forces.

Again, the Christian's strength and beauty is from within. He is to open the heart for the coming of Christ, as the flower opens to the coming of the sun. At his coming there is joy, peace and good-will to all men. Then the spirit bathes in the life-giving floods of Calvary and sings a new song of life forever. Here is the source of all power and beauty. When prayers get dull and are pushed out by noise and bluster, testimonies are lengthy and cold, gifts small and hard to secure (secured only by the pump system), you may be sure there is something wrong. When God selected the model He per-

fecting him in the crucible and then ordained that we should be conformed to his likeness. Did you ever watch the growth of a Lebanon cedar in a glass house? At first the growth was rapid, but soon the dimensions of the house were filled and it turned backward to the earth, filled the place as a weak, scrubby, crooked, unsightly shrub. It always reminds me of hot-house Christians who think they know it all at the beginning of life, but when the strong pillars that hold them are moved, they say the same prayers, cry over the same stories, sing the same songs, give the same amount, vote the same ticket and growl over the same troubles.

In Paris may be found a mosaic of surpassing beauty. It is made of little pieces of glass, rock, marble and minerals, unsightly and worthless in themselves, but passing through the hand of the artist each is made to strengthen and beautify the whole picture. So our God is gathering Jap, Chinaman, African, Norwegian and American and cleansing, burnishing and beautifying them until in his home a living mosaic shall appear as the wonder of angels and the delight of God. I want to be there. Yes; I mean to be—don't you?

IV

BIBLE METHOD OF CLEANSING.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."—Psalm 119: 9.

These words suggest many lines of thought. Were I an artist I might spend the hour in presenting a young man on the threshold of endless life with unconditioned immortality, in the midst of infinite resources, possessed of a spirit such as the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding. But there is a philosophy that art never can present or answer. Why should a young man desire to change his ways, leave his associations and environment? Why should he desire to be clean? It is easy and natural to be ignorant. Any boy can stand at the base of the mountain and throw stones into the brook, but he who would stand on the shoulders of the mountain, wash his blood in the oxygen of the higher currents and look out into God's spacious heavens must climb. The weakest of men can drift down the river with the tide or current, but it takes a manly man to make harbor at the head of navigation against tide and current. Any man can be an agnostic, boasting of his ignorance or infidelity; but he must overcome if he would see God.

Why, then, this cry from the spirit of man? Because he is a man, and there is a spirit within him and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding such as begets aspirations. It is that which gives man his superiority over all things and created beings. To man was given the right of control when creation was completed, and he and he only was told to say "Our Father." Thank God, that is the possible right of all men, a part of the furnishing of every soul, the only condition of adoption into God's family. It may be found in every soul. Sometimes it is like the broken shaft or shattered vessel in the debris of an ancient city, merely indicating what the design was, what the architect had in mind. But it is there. Summon the most vile man in all your community and ask him what man ought to be, and why he is not what he knows he should be, and he will lift the standard higher than the most erratic, enthusiastic perfectionist. His standard admits of no possible weakness or waywardness. Somehow, by some law that thought has been burning for utterance, and he really longs for the minute to be all that his ideal calls for. Because of this men often, and suddenly, change from sin to holiness, from shame to honor, drunkenness to sobriety, from idleness to industry. Did you ever try to account for the marvelous change and complete reformation that took place in Jean Valjean. When he saw the possible manhood and greatness set forth in the spirit of the good bishop, he saw a man large

enough to forgive and said: "I can and I will be a man." That saved him and has saved millions. Saul of Tarsus met his ideal man and sprang up into his life and found it within himself.

Again. The Word, who was God, was made flesh, took upon Himself our form, and the world saw in Him man's possibilities. When the old king saw the heavens mirrored in the placid waters of the lake he cried: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork." That is, the arrangement and movements, the beauty and power of the heavens tell us of God. They are creatures of Deity, not made by hands. So when we see and know man as he came forth from the hand of Him who made the heavens and the earth and all that therein is, we shall long to be like Him. One look at man in the light of his possibilities will awaken a desire to break through our narrow, benighted environments and reach the heights of our vision. When a man catches a glimpse of what he may be he cannot rest until he is what the aspirations of his spirit long for, for there are heights to scale and depths to sound, pictures to be painted and environments to be created, fruit to be gathered and joys to be enlarged. Have you ever measured man by God's outlay for him? Have you ever studied the law in its majesty and followed its leading until the day star of hope arose within your own heart and the darkness dispelled, sin was burned out and the chill of selfishness melted as snow over the

forget-me-nots of love? Surely, God must have seen in man more than has yet appeared or he never would have sacrificed so much for him. That which now appears is not in keeping with God's outlay. The law is in itself a most wonderful document, only surpassed by the sacrificial offering of Jesus. A certain Western lawyer claiming to be an infidel, while conversing with a quaint and eccentric aged clergyman, asked: "What has the Bible ever done for any community?" The answer was: "Take the law as given Moses, study it in its application to the development of character, the purity of home and the strength of society." In a few months they met again. This time the lawyer said: "Where did Moses get the principles set forth in the Decalogue? I cannot see wherein the experience of the ages can enable the wisest of the wise to add or take from it one word that would make it more potent, or more perfectly meet the conditions of men, home and society." But that man did not see the majesty and glory of the law.

There are many who think of the law as given in the interest of good government, but fail to recognize the Governor. They live and die without seeing, as Plato and Demosthenes saw, the impossibility of man's enacting law to a purpose, therefore the Infinite must apply to it. We decorate the graves of hundreds of thousands of our heroic dead who died to save the best form of government on earth without realizing that its weakness

was in the administration and not in the government or Constitution. It was the weakness and sinfulness of men that made it necessary for eight hundred thousand men to be sacrificed in order that the nation might come to its supremacy. The weakness was not in the law, but in man and angels, who failed to apprehend its nature and purpose. It was never designed to save men, but to restrain and show them that the way of the transgressor is hard, and as a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. Nay, nay; we shall never know the majesty of the law until we see Jesus, who has filled it full and is the end thereof. God has "provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." How often these feet have stepped upon the emerald and the onyx; these eyes looked over the city, and these ears heard the music; oh, my lips have quivered for one touch of the water of life as it flowed from beneath the throne, but there is no hope until the living Christ forgives and cleanses me. It was this view that led the Psalmist to ask: "Wherewithal shall (can) a young man cleanse his way?" He saw the weakness of men, the uncertainty of princes and the instability of friendships, and cried from the deep of his soul for help, that he might reach the ideal manhood found in himself. Christ is the supremacy of the law in that he not only throws light upon the wreck, but supplies the power whereby man may be-

come the Son of God. I wonder no longer that the saints sang

“Hail sovereign grace that first began
The scheme to rescue fallen man.

This has always been my joy. I need to see a man who lives as I have to live, and moves among men as I am expected to move. Such a man touches me with great helpfulness. This to me solves one of Paul’s mysteries; why God “was manifested in the flesh.” Some seem to be troubled over the miraculous conception and incarnation of our Christ, but it is my only way into God. I must see God, and that in the life of a man, by incarnation, or never hope to see Him in glory.

How can I be made meet for the society of God? By taking heed, giving attention to God’s Word. Can science, ancient or modern, experience long and varied, add anything here? Take heed, know and apply God’s law. This is not in keeping with the spirit of the world to-day. Time, money and thought are largely directed with a view of entertainment. Art and science, music and literature are all on duty to entertain or make us entertaining. Everybody seems bent upon finding the latest phase of thought, shade of doubt and statement of conviction that will not trouble them. Let a stranger appear in any community, and the question is not: “Who or what is he?” O, no! “Where has he been?” “What can he tell us to interest us?” “What have you read of late? How did you like it?” “Isn’t his

style just charming?" Never a word as to what you think of his conclusions; what impressions did the reading leave, were you convinced or brought under conviction. I am often reminded of a boy who was whipping his younger brother and a passer-by seized him by the collar and said: "What were you thinking about?" Said he: "I was not thinking at all; I was just doing it." This is not strange, for we live in a hurrying rushing, feverish haste, such as allows but little time for thought, no time for meditation. Tell me, please, how men and women can expect to escape the evils so well thought out, systematized and entertainingly presented without meeting those whose only business is to capture and lead to ruin?

"Take heed." First, of thyself. There are infinite possibilities within one's self to which most men are indifferent and which no man knoweth. There are islands, continents, rivers and seas within human consciousness from whence come influences, inspirations and suggestions, which if received, analyzed and utilized would lead to great victories and achievements. On the other hand, there are weaknesses that need guarding and fortifying in order that we may come to that perfection God designed we should possess and for which he has provided. But, if ignorant, why be alarmed? Just there is the danger. A gentleman traveling in the old world, crept into a deserted castle to spend a night in the midst of ruins. During his

slumber he was awakened by a heavy pressure on his chest. He did not know what it was nor from whence it came. The moon, on her nightly mission, filtered a ray of light through a crevice in the wall. To his horror, he saw the gleaming eyes of a monster serpent. After a desperate struggle he managed to escape unhurt. When was he in greatest danger—before or after he was awakened? Certainly when asleep. So is every man who is asleep in sin. For weaknesses, cherished sins buried in the slumbering soul will sooner or later wreck and ruin the man or woman who thoughtlessly drifts on over the sea of life. Many a hopeful mind has been ruined, many a conscience silenced and reason dethroned by the accumulation of evils they knew little or nothing about.

There are weak places in every heart that need to be strengthened by the hiding of God's Word. His Word is a living fortification over which no enemy can ever pass. To know one's danger is of infinite importance; hence the incarnation of Christ as the "Light of the World." When Holland's bottom lands were covered with forty-four villages, and all seemed happy and prosperous, the arm of the sea uplifted itself and swept all out into the deep; but Holland did not see or realize her danger or the weakness of her position. She slept on, thinking it a freak of nature, such as would never occur again. In twelve years it was repeated, with the loss of eighty thousand men, women and chil-

dren. Then Holland awoke to build dykes forty feet above high-water mark. Since then millions have been spent annually to protect her people. Many look on the havoc sin is making as though it would never reach them, while the same conditions of ruin are with them. Awake! I beseech you, awake, and hide God's Word within your hearts, that sin come not into your life with its destructive power. Awake, before you have cause to lament the awful loss of life occasioned by your indifference. God's Word is the only safe fortification wherein we can hope to rest securely from the sweep of the sea of sin.

For this reason we are exhorted to think according to God's Word—that we may realize the greatness of our needs. Then we should appreciate more fully the perfection of God's system of help. When the wise Franklin had advanced in years and had outgrown the measles of doubt, he met a young admirer who had been overcome and swamped in doubts. He said: "Young man, my advice to you is, that you read and cultivate an acquaintance with and firm belief in the Holy Book." In this he was not alone. Thomas Jefferson once said: "I have always said and always will say, that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers and better husbands and better homes." Sir Isaac Newton said: "We accept the Scriptures as the Word of God and to be the most sublime philosophy. I find more in them

that is genuine, authentic and reliable as history, than in any other work written." And S. T. Coleridge: "I know the Bible is an inspired book, because it finds me at greater depth of my being than any other book." Take heed, then, according to God's law. Study it as the mariner studies his chart, use it as the helmsman and pilot uses the compass, for we are out on the ocean, all inexperienced sailors. We have never sailed this way before, we shall never sail it again. There are shoals and trade winds—God knows all about them. If we fail in this, it is a hopeless and utter failure. In view of the importance of the voyage, the worth of the immortal soul, and the possibility of shipwreck, take heed according to God's established law and follow the course indicated by Him in revelation.

Why think according to God's law? For two reasons. First, He knows what awaits us in the unfolding future. The child objects, very naturally, to study, discipline and toil, for he has no sense of what will be expected and required of him when he enters the arena of life. The parent has, and therefore insists on the child being educated and trained for coming events. We can have no conception of future requirements, such as will greet us in the unhoused, untried future. That which we, "because of our present environments think of least importance," may be of greatest importance to Him who knows all things; therefore, His law, His com-

mandments, His prohibitions, should be cherished and observed most carefully.

Again, His Word has been tried, tested, as the chemists test the ore. Every promise and prophecy, fixing results and events (up to date) has been tested. Not those of the Old Testament alone, but those of the older old, new and newer Testaments have all been tested, so that students may know of their value. The most severe ordeals have been applied. When we look on the bound volume of God's Word and recall its age, a history reaching back into the dawn of creation's morn, where the footprints of men have been washed out, and the works of their hands have long since smouldered in the dust, then remember that this book has stood the test of time. We wonder how anyone can speak flippantly or slightly of its contents. We are exhorted to read Heroditus and Homer because of their reference to the buried past, but they knew nothing of the facts cited by Job in his thirty-eighth chapter. He deals with elements, principles and works that were known to God before the foundations of the earth were laid. He located the springs that now make possible the artesian wells, furnishing water for the thirsting millions. He located Orion and the Pleiades, whose forces are associated with the march of worlds. He spoke of men who outlived their generation by giving the world facts established five hundred years before Heroditus was born. He made it possible for

students to walk back over bridges into civilizations where kings reigned, artisans wrought, who are unheard of elsewhere. With the aid of Moses and Job we listen to the bells of the morning.

Students of this book not only know of the past, but they see a new earth and a new heaven rising out of the sea of the future. They linger not in questioning where Heroditus and Homer fell. They are not bewildered by the Asiatic philosopher's utterances, for they are in possession of a law and a system of ethics in circulation a thousand years before Buddha was born and nine hundred and sixty years before his illumination beneath the wisdom tree. Time renders it more and more valuable as the centuries come and go. While time conquers all other works it gives ring and force to the living oracles of God. On an old mosque in Damascus, once a Christian church, but for the last twelve centuries ranked among the holiest of Mohammedan sanctuaries, are written these words: "Thy kingdom, oh Christ, is an everlasting kingdom and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." In that old synagogue the name of Christ was blasphemed from week to week for twelve hundred years, but the inscription remained undisturbed, a divine record abiding amid the wreck of time. Many sophomoric men and women appear to be much alarmed at the criticism of the critics, but there is no danger. God has locked His thoughts in vehicles beyond the touch of man. No mortal

can reach them but by the Holy Ghost, who came to lead into all truth. This ordeal strikes old earth dumb every thirty-five years, while all the works of men suffer and disappear at its passing the Book remains. Halls, temples and cities, once massive and well-sustained, now sleep in the debris. Nothing of human genius or power can stand this test. Books suffer most. Those that once moved the world are now obsolete and almost forgotten. I remember sitting up all night to hear my father read "Uncle Tom's Cabin," but you seldom hear the book spoken of to-day. There is no longer a demand for such a work. Indeed, there are very few books that outlive the record of one century. Language, as a vehicle of thought, is constantly changing. Words once full of force and beauty are now meaningless and have passed out of use, but amid all this the Bible remains unchanged and unharmed, for it is the vehicle of Jehovah's thought. My friend may challenge this statement by calling attention to the new version and the adaption of the Scriptures to the conditions of men. The growth in thought and liberty seem to demand changes. Criticism may be honestly offered, but the changes are not in the Word of God, but in the vehicles or translations of the Word in which God's truth is stored. We must distinguish between the Bible and its translations. We have a great many translations of the old Book, but there is no change in the Word of God. Words written by Jehovah on the

tables of stone after fifteen hundred years of oral direction took their place in the heaven of truth, never to be changed. God took this matter into His own hand and killed the languages in which the book was given, so that the Hebrew and Greek should no longer be subject to the changes that come to living languages, and all the translators of the ages are compelled to go back to the original forms in which God deposited His will and make every translation from the ever-abiding and eternally fixed Word of God. This is the latest book in the library. Its description of places and events are as modern and exact in the use of terms and figures as those of Phelps, Newman, Ridgeway, Volney, Gibbon or Curtis. Orators and authors still find their best figures in scriptural language. We have in one book a history older than the morning, reaching back to the throne of an eternal will, and later than the latest discoveries of science, reaching on to the reception of saints and giving a description of the scenes after the stars have all gone out.

Times tests this Book as few others could be tested, because of its prophetic nature. The Old Testament Scriptures are threaded through and through with prophetic utterances. Jeremiah told the people of his day that Babylon should fall and when they queried how such a citadel could be taken, knowing that the walls were too thick and high to be battered down by any weapon known to

that age, he said: "The Euphrates will dry up and the city shall be filled with soldiers as thick as caterpillars, the walls shall be deserted and the king shall die." Had he lived at the time when Cyrus turned the waters of the Euphrates aside and entered with his army into the halls, on the night of Belshazzar's feast, the prophecy could not have been more accurate. If you read Isaiah as found in the fourteenth chapter and the fourth verse, where he states that the people shall take up this proverb against the king of Babylon and say, "How hath the oppressor ceased, the Golden City ceased," you will be forced to admit that omniscience gave birth to that declaration, for the language of prophecy and history are the same and we are compelled to acknowledge the presence of omniscience in recording the events of Scripture long before they were enacted. David in speaking of Christ's birth gives dates, names and places. Isaiah gives a description of time, place, people and the escort and fireworks attending his advent. David fifteen hundred years before Christ's birth and Peter thirty-three years after recorded the fact of His resurrection in the same language.

Again, these standards have been tested by experiences of men. A man may be ignorant of the law that condemns, and yet fall under condemnation. We may try in a thousand different ways to justify Peter in denying his Lord, and we may make out a very plausible case, as many modern preachers

have done, but we find him weeping bitterly under a deep sense of condemnation for having done wrong. His experience melts all the sophistries of men, and this law is without change amid the ever-changing conditions of men. You and I have been excused by our friends when we found no ground for excuse at the bar of our own judgment.

Two young men went to hear a noted blasphemer one evening. One of the men was a Christian, the other a moralist. The lecturer with his sarcasm and scorn swept the whole field of Christian ethics. On their way home one was heard to say: "Well, Jim, I have thought of these things before, and certainly he makes a very plausible case. I am frank to say I cannot meet his charges or refute his statements. How do you feel? Come, you claim to be a Christian, tell me." "Well, I have thought of these things and there are many of them I can't explain or refute, but that don't disturb me in the least, for there are a few things I know, and they are worth more than all the things the lecturer don't know." These young men represent a very large class. There are thousands who go through life with a large bundle of negatives, crying and screaming "Who knows! Who knows!" "Who can understand?" Because they find no solution to the hidden things, they deny the things which are revealed. There are others, who having tested a few things by experience, are in possession of definite knowledge. These await confidently the enlarge-

ment of their horizon and the development of their intellect by the enrichment of an experience for revelations concerning such things as are hidden—all the argument in the world cannot disturb their faith in the truth thus demonstrated. To them the Twenty-third and Fifty-first Psalms, the first chapter of the First Epistle of John and the fifth chapter of Romans are yea and amen in Christ Jesus by the law of Christian experience. It only takes one night in condemnation to prove that the way of the transgressor is hard and one minute in the exercise of faith in the blood of the Lamb settles the question of its efficacy to save. When a poor sinner saved by grace stands before the White Throne and in weakness begins to tell of God's matchless love and endless mercy I think the angels will cease singing and stand with uncovered heads to hear the simple story of love set forth in this tried Book. I commend it to every young man I address as the one book of precepts and promises that has been tested, not as a relic, but as a counselor and guide. It will guide you into all the glories of manhood, priesthood and knightship. Hide it in your heart. Let nothing take it from you. Once there, no enemy can ever erase it. When all else wastes and disappears, God's Word will shine forth with lessons of life.

There is an old legend of a chime of bells, constructed by a genius and placed in the tower of a convent in the heart of Switzerland. In time of

war he was banished from his native land. Years after, returning and nearing the border line of the homeland, he heard the winds sweeping through those famous bells and was overcome. Borne by the pure melody of those sweet tones, he entered his endless home. My brother, fix these precious promises in your heart that when your wanderings are all over and you near the eternal shores of that land of truth you may hear the sweet cadence, "I will come again and receive you unto myself." It has guarded others, it will guard you. A few years ago a mother returning to her home came to the bridge where she was wont to pass, but the brook had swollen and lifted and carried away the bridge. She halted, then stepped on the strand thrown across by the workmen. She ventured, then turned back, for the waters were too wild. But, fixing her eyes on the opposite shore, she walked steadily over. A friend met her with this salutation: "How dare you cross?" Lifting her hand, she pointed to a cottage on the bank and said: "I have loved ones there who are waiting for me. I saw others cross, and knew I could."

Brethren, when we come to the dark stream we will fix our eyes on heaven and with this Book of Books go steadily over, for we have loved ones on yonder shore awaiting our coming.

V

BELIEVING GOD.

"Have faith in God." Mark 11: 22.

These are the words of Jesus, called forth by that disciple to whom we are indebted for many of the best sayings of the Master. Peter had a philosophic turn of mind. He always asked why. Standing in the presence of the fig tree, whose leaves had curled, whose roots had died, until the whole tree had become unsightly, without the presence of any enemy or cause, he inquired how this change had been wrought, by what law had that thing of beauty become so hideous. Jesus, perceiving his query, said: "Peter, make connection with the source of all power. Have faith in God, and this will be plain." In this He voiced a principle of universal application, for without faith nothing that now is ever would have been. The seas would never have been crossed, the forests swept, the mines opened or the cities builded. On hillside and in valley men stand with grain in hand ignorant of the inherent capability of growth necessary to harvest; ignorant of the external appliances and unable to create a kernel, yet believing in the presence and wisdom of the great Chemist. They can put to-

gether all the constituent parts of wheat, but cannot give it the power to reproduce its kind. Yet they put the last dollar into wheat to throw into the harrowed face of the earth, yea, sometimes they put a mortgage on the old farm for seed, and go to some commercial centre and agree to furnish hundreds or thousands of bushels when they have not one kernel in sight.

Were I permitted to spring to the front and direct the thought of thinking men and control the convictions of the rulers, I know of no words more potent than these words of Jesus, "Have faith in God." This gives to all a definite object for life, greater factors and energies. Faith always has a being made manifest, a pledge or promise to grasp, receive or reject. Without this none can intelligently believe; for instance: I look for an architect and on entering the room I see evidence of plan, thought and conception by which I measure the building, for back of these walls, windows, lamps, pews, pulpit and altar was thought, and back of the thought was a thinker and I am face to face with an architect. He thought of a room into which men and women and children were to gather by day and by night, for the purpose of being addressed, hence this rostrum, these windows, these wires and this desk. Now I am asked to assent to that as a fact. Back of these concrete walls there must have been a plan, a conception, back of the conception a thought, back of the thought a thinker, and I assent

to the fact of an architect, though I may not believe in him. Now all this may be seen in the hut down by the stream in yonder forest, where the hermit lays the stones on which to fry his fish. When I see the track of a hermit, I believe a hermit has been here. When I take a watch into my hand, so well adjusted as to run twenty-four hours without varying a minute, and yet so small as to be worn beneath a glove on a lady's finger and not be noticed, I assent to the existence of a watchmaker. So, on entering this man-house (man-home) I find it identified with other worlds and planets, and they are in motion; and that this earth is a part of a great system, called the solar system, and that it is a part of other systems, which constitute one great whole, wherein millions of worlds are in motion, and have been for ages (I don't know how long), but they all move on without collision or loss of time, and I cry out with the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

But more, I am confronted by Him at every turn. That little bee moving so busily, has heard from Him this Summer, for the bee was not last Summer, and somebody has told him to look out for winter, lest he starve. Somebody has told the squirrel up here that the winter is to last a long time; so I find him assorting the fruits and nuts, as

philosophically as though he knew all about the future. He selects the apples and nuts that will keep the longest and stores them back in the hole, to live on when the perishable is gone. Who told him? I set a trap and catch him and take him South, and he picks no more. He has heard of the change in demands. Some years ago a friend of mine went into the forest with his gun in search of game. On entering a thicket he saw a bird seemingly in great trouble. She disappeared but returned quickly and dropped a leaf over a nest in which her young were nestling, and then seemed so calm that my friend said he approached the tree and sat down to learn the sequel. A huge serpent was wending his way up that tree. When he got where he was to take her young, he touched the leaf, stiffened and fell to the ground, while the mother-bird lifted the leaf and rejoiced with her young. Tell me who told that bird what leaf to get, and the young birds not to touch it? God. And has He forgotten us, exhausted His medium so that He cannot speak to us? I cast about and find a letter, written in the interests of men. Now, I shall not take your time this morning to prove the authority and credibility of this book. It is enough for my present purpose to know that He who wrote the book knew where I should be, what I should need and how to help me. If I get into trouble and go to the post office, and there find that somebody has knowledge of my misfortune and has put into a letter a check sufficient to meet

all demands—the next time I get into trouble I shall be very likely to go straight to the post office, and if then I found the same thing occurred, I should be likely to learn the way to the post office as oft as I got into trouble. Well, forty years ago I found myself in trouble. God's laws were not pleasing to me. Like other little men, I got to thinking I could criticise the movements of God. Something or somebody was wrong. I found in the first Epistle of John, first chapter, ninth verse, a recipe. I took it and it met the case. It brought harmony within and all things were easily adjusted, and for forty years I have been going to this book in times of peace and in times of war; in prosperity and in adversity; at home and among strangers, and it has never failed me. I accept it to be my Father's letter written in my interest. But this is not necessarily saving faith. It is simply assenting to facts, such as rational thinking men are forced to accept. What, then, is it to believe savingly? It is to appreciate or utilize the facts received.

That little boy may slip going out from this service, and may break his arm. I think I could convince him that his bones could be adjusted. He accepts my statement, but that does not set the bones. What will? Put the boy into the hands of a surgeon and let him apply his skill and the bones may be adjusted and the arm saved. I read "It shall be well with the righteous." I assent to the fact, but not until I seek righteousness is it well with me.

The salvation is in the righteousness of the right. Some one may say it shall be well with all men. Yea, but that is not faith. He who builds on that statement presumes, for there is no authentic promise made by any one. He who presumes takes the case in his own hands, while he who believes relies on the strength of the promiser. Let me illustrate: When God sought a man to lead Israel out of Egypt, He told Moses that He would go with him and give him rest. Moses accepted the conditions, and when on the banks of the sea gave orders to move into the waters, believing that God would fulfil His promise. And so He did, for the waters stood aside and Israel moved on unharmed. Now the hosts of Pharaoh presumed that if Israel could do that they could. But they had no promise. They plunged in and have not been heard from since. Be careful when you presume. Be confident when you believe. But the exhortation is faith in God. Faith in itself accomplishes nothing; it is in what, as in whom you believe. He who believes in himself as in men or organizations, will sooner or later fail, not because of his faith, but because of the limitations of the man. There are men in whom I believe, but there are some things I would not trust with them. Why? Because they are human and, therefore, limited in their powers. There may come a time when it would be impossible for them to do all they desire to do. I once attempted to carry a man off the battlefield after both lower limbs had

been shattered. I ran perhaps three times the length of this church and I came to a panting halt. He said, "I know you would, Sergeant; but I know you haven't the power." I took his dying message, and left him to die, while I escaped with this thought ringing in my mind, "Oh, that I had power."

So there are some organizations that I believe in, but none with which I would trust the salvation of my soul, because they are human in their constituency. But when I reach up and out beyond the human and the limited, and put my hand in the hand of the Infinite, I am beyond the possibility of failure. He is able, no matter how changed or forbidding the circumstances. Did you ever note the strength and limit of Jewish faith in the case of Mary and Martha at the grave of Lazarus, their brother? Martha said, "Hadst thou been here my brother had not died." Jesus said, "Thy brother shall rise again." "Yes, Lord, in the resurrection." That was wonderful faith, but it had a limit, for when Jesus said, "Take away the stone at the mouth of the cave," Martha and Mary both said, "My Lord, the circumstances are changed. It is too late." "But," said Jesus, "I am not subject to any circumstances. I am the resurrection. Take away the stone." Then their Christian faith stepped out and took hold on God and the dead arose. Here Jewish limitation stepped over into divine catholicity and power. An intelligent grasp on the infinite

lifts out of all limitations, such as brings perfect rest. Why, then, are men not saved when we believably ask for their salvation? Because another power is involved, that is the will of the man. To save a man against his will, if possible, would destroy his manhood, and mar God's fatherhood. We may bring conviction but he must yield in order to be saved.

Faith in God brings man into a larger life. Jesus' coming has opened the door to a larger life. He becomes the ultimatum of the soul's desire in the interests of immortality. "I am come that ye might have life more abundantly," said Jesus. We are no longer shut up between birth and death. We take our observations no longer from the mud-house with the five windows, and by faith we see the triumph from afar. By faith he brings them nigh. Science and art, literature and music, hope and charity, have become the servants of the faith. Said Jesus to the confounded and defeated disciples, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible." We have never measured up to this infinite factor, which is the gift of God and therefore reachable. We fail not so much for lack of faith as for an intelligent use of it. Faith never saves anybody, but it is the person or agency in which we believe that saves. A man may believe conscientiously in an error and be cursed thereby. I had two friends in my native State. One believed there was money in a mine opened at Mount Desert, the other be-

lieved just as honestly and sincerely that the Sullivan mine would make large returns and invested his all in it and made a fortune. The other lost all. An intelligent anchoring of your faith in God brings all God has promised and becomes the mightiest factor known in the world of forces. Were we able to harness all winds, Niagaras, electric currents and sunbeams, they could never approximate the force of a small child in the exercise of God-given faith.

In Providence, R. I., a great Corliss engine furnishes power to pump the water for the city and runs so quietly as not to disturb ordinary conversation, but a child ascends with his little cup, turns a faucet and the whole engine trembles. I have kneeled by the side of a little child when his prayer shook my inmost soul. Ah! I like this word "abundantly." It is an overflowing word. What is an abundance with God? How much does He mean when He uses the word? He says, "As the stars of heaven" for multitude, but can we comprehend the abundance of stars in number? The phrase means vastly more to-day than it did to the Apostle Paul. The telescope has multiplied every star until hundreds become thousands and thousands millions; thus is God's multiplication of energies, faculties, endowments and graces. Biblical utterances are sometimes overwhelming in their intensity of thought. Study the words in the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians when he prays that the saints

"Being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Meditate upon the wondrous truths clothed in these words: "God, who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He hath loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus—that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

When we have done our utmost to unfold these great passages, there remains an endless depth of meaning yet undisturbed. For it doth not yet appear how much our Father has in store for his children. God's illustrations are so large. "As the heavens are high above the earth, so are His thoughts above our thoughts." William McKinley's life overleaped the boundaries of death and dropped into God's orchestra and left the whole world singing "Nearer, My God, to Thee." I wonder what God meant more than to enlarge Abram's thought when He told him that He would multiply his seed like the sands on the sea-shore? When will mortals measure up to that one illustration of God's increase? I have often felt like saying, "Oh! Daniel, tell me, how you felt

when God said, 'They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.'"

But neither of these touch the tides of that immortal sweep, given in life more abundantly. Life is immeasurable and endless. Faith in God brings that abundance of life. Physically they are made larger, more perfectly developed, rounded out and symmetrically builded, for they are as trees planted by the rivers of waters, whose leaves do not wither and whose fruit is not blighted. Away up on the shores of the Great Bear Lake is a little scrubby, dwarf cedar tree. It belongs to the family of the great Lebanon trees, but up there it has struggled a century for existence. When planted in rich soil and transferred to congenial atmosphere, at once it enlarges its trunk, sends deeper its roots, lifts higher its head and expresses more perfectly the new life awakened and called forth by this transfer. So the coming of man into the atmosphere of the Christian. He is brought into a healthful condition and given an inspiration, which makes even the life we now live in the flesh more abundant. But in no sense does this illustrate the fulness of that life which is within, when once it is clarified and burnished with the brightness of the King; for it pours forth the possessions of a new creation. Many wicked wretches go about the world with well-developed bodies, which are little more than homes of ignorance and vice, in which angels try titles for kingship. Christ did not come to develop giants in

physical strength, but rather to turn that strength by the use of the mind into right channels. We speak of Samson and Hercules and admire them. But they appear to the best advantage where their physical force is guided by loyalty and patriotism; for thought, emotion and affection can never express themselves in the mere enlargement of the body. When love begins to minister there must be a new world as well as a new creature. If you shut man up in this world and give him no other field, he immediately becomes a very small creature. No matter how large his plans or how important he may think them, he will never complete them, and the world in which he lives will never be enriched by his efforts. He is so small that even the trees in the forest mock him and live to rustle their leaves over his children's children, until generations sleep beneath their shade. Oceans laugh and point the proudest representative of time to their powers, now sleeping in the waters. Stars shine on through the ages undisturbed, while nations and generations come and go the way of all the earth. "The days of our years are three-score years and then; and if by reason of strength they may be four-score years, yet is their strength, labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away." Never until life lifts its form to join the family of the infinite and find representation in that land whither the glory of the nation is to be brought, does it take to itself value. We are too often satisfied with the beauty of those

things which pass away with a single presentation. The picture painted on the window pane by the king of the morning, who mixes his paints in the founts of an ice-house, may surpass in beauty anything that art has ever approached. You may find more glory on the lawn of a country home, on a summer's morning than can be brought into a cluster of diamonds; but these are comparatively worthless because there is no law by which they can be preserved. This fact ought to enter into our estimate of values. Those things that perish in using ought not to be compared with those interests that broaden the mind, enrich the heart and are intensified in value by age. There are some things that increase in strength, beauty and power as the ages go by. "Abundantly" is God's use of a word in view of enriching and impressing an idea, and, if I mistake not, He uses it in this connection in view of strengthening the preceding clause which carries with it the idea of a super-abundant life, and places the passage in the same category with Paul's wonderful climax where we are to have the Christ life so abundantly as to make it a "Far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Jesus not only raised Lazarus to life, but He restored to health and ordered the grave clothes removed in order that he might have the fulness of life. So to-day He removes or intensifies all things to our endless good in view of the abundance of

His mercy. This He does by lifting them out of all limitations. Men may be made perfect in obedience in this life, but never in manhood, for time is too short. We may die ignorant of many things; but death is to him who believes, a message sent to direct us into broader fields, richer treasures and grander opportunities. Oh, what would mortals do in these days of larger interests when millions and billions measure the output, and wedge and screw give place to dynamite and electricity, were it not for the larger life, the clearer vision and the broader faith? But this faith brings man into a larger world. I once stood on the lawn watching a nest of birds. The mother was clothed in plumage so rich as not to be perfected in our Northern climate and the song with a richness never reached in the chill of the North. I began to feel sad for the little birds, when God whispered to my spirit saying, "I have a summerland where frost never comes and I know how to teach them to fly away when the time comes." I entered my home, where a sweet-spirited boy was wasting, with a new conception of the possibilities of faith in God to perfect the trinity of manhood in His summerland.

When a boy my mother was very careful to impress me with the study of biography, and she taught me to revere the life and character of Christopher Columbus. A few years ago, when his statue was presented to this country, at Philadel-

phia, I first saw the form wrapped in the European and American flags. Soon the flags began to unfurl from the form of him whom I almost worshipped, and I shouted myself hoarse; for with his appearance came an avalanche of all those lessons of childhood and their long-slumbering inspirations. But there was another, of whom she was more careful to teach me—Jesus the Christ, wrapt in the Old and New Dispensations; and some day angels will roll away the clouds and not the form but the living Christ will appear, while men and angels shout:

“All hail the power of Jesus’ Name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all.”

We have little knowledge of that life which is fanned by the wings of ministering angels and fed on the hidden manna of heaven; but God knows how to give a life higher significance, a broader catholicity and a grander spirituality than we have any conception of at present. He will enable you to feel the kingliness of heirship and put on the express image of His glory, for the Saviour said in His prayers, “Father, I pray that they may be one even as we are one and the glory thou gavest Me I have given them.”

So I exhort you this morning to stretch your minds over the sublime energies of God’s mind, that He may show you worlds yet unexplored,

waters whose depths have never been sounded, and stars whose swiftness no man can yet measure and beholding His glory, we shall be changed into His image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

VI

PRESENTING THE CHRIST.

"And straightway he preached Christ in the Synagogues, that He is the Son of God."—Acts 9: 20.

It was a great event in the history of the world when Saul of Tarsus met Jesus of Nazareth; an event that has touched more and larger interests than any event since the coming of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost. The placing of the powers and talents, and the identification of such a man as Saul of Tarsus, his catholicity of spirit, intensity of conviction and intellectual training with any system of benefits or ministry, would have been great at that time; but to secure such a man as an apostle of grace in the dawning of the Spirit's dispensation, was an event too large for angels to comprehend. They still desire to look into it, and in the eternal ages we shall praise God for the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The fulness of conditions, as well as of time had come for just such a work as he and only he could do. Nature, culture and grace had gifted him for the hour; the law and the prophets had established confidence in the plan and purpose of God to purify unto himself a people; the advent and ministry, death and resurrection and ascension of

Jesus had created a great expectancy. The coming of the Holy Ghost as teacher and comforter had established confidence in the continuance and continuity of Jesus' ministry with power, until the world was ready for some great and permanent movement. The followers of Jesus were only a little removed from materialism in its worst form. Just one step from that form of superstition that held to gods many and such as could be taken with them, to be called on in times of danger. They felt that they must see their leader as they had seen Jesus. Few, if any, had any clear conception of the divine incarnation of the Christ-life.

The call was for a man who could personify the Saviour in their midst, and Saul of Tarsus was that man. He had been crucified with Christ and filled with the Holy Ghost. This enabled him to call Jesus Lord; to see Him, not only as prophet, priest and friend, but as God. To him from that hour, God had come down in Christ to rescue lost men. His crucifixion had enlarged his horizon and quickened his conception, and filled him with an inspiration and hope all immortal. Buddha tarried under his wisdom tree until illuminated and inspired he went forth to establish a system of thought in which millions have found comfort. Mahomet waited alone in a cave in the desert until there was born in his spirit a desire to live for some purpose, such as led to that system of worship and devotion wherein millions are housed. But Saul tarried with God until

the thunders of Sinai ceased and the light of Hermon grew pale, and immortality was voiced beyond the grave. Then, in the light of the resurrection, he saw the light of the world; yea, he saw God. Oh, what a moment in the history of time that was, when Jesus severed Saul from the old Adamic stock, and put him into his wounds and in his blindness he cried: "Saviour, look with pitying eye; Saviour, help me or I die." Then he felt the flow of the divine life surging through his whole being and shouted: "I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me." It was that experience that sent Saul forth with a life that was large enough to serve. It was that kind of a conviction that made Luther and Knox, Wesley and Calvin and their successors unconquerable. Many are wondering why conversion does not make all men mighty. Such need to learn that conversion only converts what is to be converted, and God can only sanctify (or set apart) that which is brought to Him to be sanctified or set apart. There may have been others as well fitted for the work of that hour as Saul of Tarsus was. If so, they did not appear. Who among the men of the first century was so well equipped by nature and training to meet, hold and direct the Jews as was Saul of Tarsus? At that time they were a great people. They held a large place in the thought of the religious world. They claimed the right to hold the oracles of God; to answer all questions and exercise all religious rites. Their priests and their temple had no com-

petitors. For a man to lift his hand or voice in questioning their interpretation of the law was a crime to be punished by death without a hearing. Such a man must be crucified as a blasphemer and a disturber of the peace; and yet, they were a great people and held much that was sacred and that must be retained. Their devotion and loyalty was worthy of highest commendation. Where will you find a richer expression of loyalty than in the reply of the captives down by the waters of the Euphrates, "If I forget thee, oh, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Where will you find a scene or expression of more genuine devotion than that in the courts of Jerusalem to-day? Go into what is called the "Jew's wailing place," where fragments of the old wall remain. There you may find the old Jew in tears as he reads and prays; there he rocks to and fro in spasms of grief and breathes his prayers into the chinks in the walls, crying for the glory that has departed and the re-establishing of the fires on the altars to them so sacred.

To enlarge the form and yet preserve the spirit, demanded a peculiar man—one trained in all their methods, able to feel as they felt, and yet capable of adjusting the forms to the demands of the age and the growth of human thought. Saul of Tarsus was that man. He had been trained in the Hebrew faith. He was thoroughly versed and able to ex-

plain the law in all its varied applications. Let him speak for himself and recite his experience. "Art thou a Hebrew? So am I. If any man thinketh he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I am that man; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law a Pharisee, and after the most straightest sect I lived a Pharisee. I have tested Judaism and know wherein it fails; I came from the very heart of Israel." Such a man could tear off the wrappings of Judaism and expose to the Gentile world the weakness of that system, perverted by the worldly priest. Only such a man could ever have written the letter to the Romans or have felt as the author of that letter felt when he wrote, "I could be accursed from Christ for my brethren's and kinsmen's sake." He knew what had been done for the Jews and how much they had accomplished as a people. He could say I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; he loved the Jew as none other could, who had never been one.

Who better equipped to meet the Greeks, then in their glory? He was familiar with the philosophy of Zenophen and Zeno, Socrates and Plato. He was familiar with Grecian art and literature and could explain every phase of the worship of their gods and unravel the mysteries of the unknown God. Only such a man could command a hearing among the authorities, but Saul of Tarsus was born in a

city of schools and universities, not to be surpassed by Alexandria, Athens or Rome. Born of scholarly parents in the city of Tarsus, where art and culture made its boast amid wealth, splendor and learning, he spent his youth in a city where Cicero found congenial companions, and lived during his term as Governor of the Province. Saul was so impressed by the educational interests of his early home that in every letter he refers to the bazaars, schools, palaces, statues, ships and fortifications of Tarsus. To him it was no mean city. He was early fitted for college and sent to Jerusalem, where he had the best of advantages found in his age, his favorite teacher being Galmaliel. This enabled him to speak with ease in the presence of Kings and potentates, and caused Felix to tremble before his mighty utterances. So you ask why then were not more of the great men of that age converted? I answer for the same reason that they were not in Jesus' time, and are not to-day—because of the unbelief of the people. Men of renown have gone to their graves through tears and sacrifices with few converts.

Again: Rome was mistress of the world. Her forces commanded attention. She had the best system of military power known in that age of the world. Her ships were on all seas; her soldiers in all ports; her courts settled all appeals. To meet them and defend any new system, or direct attention to any new King meant death, and yet we hear this new convert saying: "I am ready to preach the

Gospel unto you who are at Rome also; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." He could say that with an unction no other preacher ever had, for he was born a Roman. He knew of their love and thirst for power. To him it was supreme till he passed over the line into the power of Jehovah's love. Listen, ye men of this world, to a man by birth a Roman, by education a Grecian, in religion a Jew, yea, a Pharisee, and then by conversion a Christian. Such a man could mould, direct and guide the people into all truth, by the energy of the Holy Ghost.

What would you expect such a man to do, when he was converted? Preach? Herald? Well, that is just what he did. He preached! Christ had entered into him as the spirit enters the temple, and the life of the man was filled, preserved and directed by the higher life, even the life of Christ. What else could he do other than to preach? That was the natural thing for him to do. Was ever anybody surprised to find Alexander hastening along the Mediterranean shore, eager to spread the civilization of Greece over Asia and Africa? Are you surprised when you read of Julius Cæsar pressing the government of Rome to western Europe or that Columbus cried "Westward" on the ship's deck in ocean's storm? Nay, these men were converts and were impelled by their convictions. A knowledge of Paul's history will convince anyone that his con-

L. O. F. G.!

viction was more intense than they all. His was a religious conviction. Prior to his conversion he could stand out against Jesus and all His followers in conscientious defiance of the Gospel and arrest, imprison or see murder in defense of his position as a Pharisee. Seemingly the murder of James and imprisonment and release of Peter, the echoes of Calvary did not move him. Nay, with the Roman soldiers at his command, unmoved by the echoes of Gethsemane, Calvary and the Lamb. The stoning of Stephen, the dying of Ananias and Sapphira, the opening heavens and the dying prayer of the Master, to which the soldiers stopped their ears. Yet Saul, untouched by sympathy and undisturbed by the counsel of his professor in school, went forth to silence the Nazarenes. But when converted he straightway preached the doctrine his new faith embraced. Such men move the world. They believe something and rejoice—not only to defend—but to proclaim. He would go to Jerusalem though the whole city of Ephesus hung about his neck in tearful entreaty for his life. With Luther he would go, though the troops of hell were there as numerous as the tiles on the housetops. Defying stripes, imprisonment, shipwrecks, martyrdom, he utters a triumphant cry, "None of these things move me."

When did he preach? Straightway. When he was converted, which was not, as some taught, a sudden act at the hand of an overpowering conqueror. Oh, no, that could have never been.

Forced obedience availeth nothing in God's kingdom. Indeed, it never occurs. Salvation never destroys the manliness of man nor the fatherhood of God. Saul of Tarsus was not suddenly smitten down by a stroke and forced into an acknowledgment of Christ as his Saviour. Nay, he stood looking on Stephen when the blood rolled over the scarred face, and he fell into the arms of Jesus saying, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," and then, looking calmly on his ignorant persecutors, said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Starting from such a scene, Paul heard one hundred and one prophecies thundering in his scholarly mind. Yet, the prayer was unto him like unto the Spirit of the promised Messiah. Perhaps he may have recalled the words of his professor in Jerusalem, at the time of Peter's imprisonment: "If this be of man it will come to naught, if of God ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye find yourself fighting against God." When he heard the great gates of Damascus and saw Hermon his brain reeled, his heart grew faint, light of his own thought touched by the searchlight of heaven flooded his soul, and he cried: "Who are thou?" Had Jesus answered saying, "I am the Messiah," Saul would doubtless have said, "I knew thou hadst not come." But when he answered, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest," the chain of Saul's argument was broken, and he cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" By that road Saul passed out of Judaism into Christianity—a change too great

and radical to be instantaneous. The earthquake, tornado and cyclone may report their arrival suddenly, but who can tell how long they have been preparing to report? So with Saul's conversion. He yielded, gave up the fight, surrendered suddenly—so did Robert E. Lee—but he may have been hours, days or even weeks coming to it. The saintly face of Stephen, the peerless prayer, an hundred and one prophecies ringing in his intelligent nature, may have overcome him and may have been crying for light when Jesus approached him.

What did he preach? Christ as the Son of God. He had learned Jesus, whom he feared most, to be his friend, and as an honest man he must stand up and defend the cross and cause of Him whom he had found to be the Messiah. He found the man Jesus who had hurled the great truth at and through Judaism until the foundations of the fathers trembled and shook, to be the word and voice of Jehovah. Immediately his hatred was turned to love, and he went forth to correct the misrepresentation of other days. The baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost equipped Saul of Tarsus for a work no other could do. His unyielding will swung into line, and his all-controlling purpose said: "This one thing I do." That motto held him ever after to the work assigned him. His conception of duty was like that of Daniel, Knox, Calvin and Wesley. Nothing could persuade him to turn from his wonted course. He had seen his Lord and Saviour and

found him whom he took to be his enemy to be his best friend.

We are told of two soldiers at Gettysburg's fight who met in deadly conflict. One fell and the living, supposing he had conquered his enemy, looked calmly into the face of his dead comrade only to find that it was his brother whom he had killed, he having been pressed into the Southern service. Imagine the feelings of that brother. Paul verily thought he was doing God's service, but he saw Jesus and heard Him say, "Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" He saw that it was his brother, and cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And from that hour he preached Christ as his friend and Saviour. And though the people were afraid of him and called him the wicked fellow, and the persecutor, yet he stood as calm as the eternal hills. It was not a casual look into the face of Jesus that filled Paul with such undying devotion. He saw the immeasurable depths of Jesus' love for lost men, and that love begot within him a new life.

I once stood with a friend looking at the statue of Benjamin Franklin and supposed I had taken in the whole man, when a wiser than I said, "Come nearer and read what this great man has said and done." Each sentence carved upon the marble revealed the secret of his greatness until the statue was all aglow with transparent glory. I saw the boy merge into manhood, and the man grow into statesmanship, until his timidity gave place to

diplomacy, his measles of doubt gave way to faith and confidence, and the Bible became the Word of God and the Sonship of the Divine shook France like a leaf in the sweep of a cyclone. Then my soul took on the proportions of its maker and designer and longed for recognition in the fatherhood of God. So Paul looked into the face of Jesus until he was changed into the same image, from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord, and cried, "For me to live is Christ." From that minute Christ was the sole theme of his preaching. The object of his study and the subject of his discourse. He made it his business to herald Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. He did not load himself with all the theories of men, but gave himself unreservedly to the preaching of this one truth. Jesus is the Christ, God's son. I had charge of a company of men for two years. They were soldiers. I remember one man who always gave me great trouble. He was constantly loading himself and his horse with so many things that it took all his time to keep them and himself out of the enemy's hands in time of battle. One day I lost him. The enemy got him, equipage and all. So there are many Christians who are constantly investigating. Always loading their faith with dogmas and their hands with methods. Their whole time is filled with research for matter to defend the dogmas entertained and they

are always ready to argue. Satan is sure to take advantage of such a man. Oh, that the Holy Ghost may intensify the one thought of salvation in and through Jesus Christ until the pulpit and press cry, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."

Where did he preach? Where would you look for a man of Paul's dimensions to appear? In the synagogue. Great men identify themselves with great organizations, where they will be held responsible and answerable for their words and deeds. Little men sometimes think themselves of so much importance that it would be conferring a great favor on any organization for them to unite with it. They ignore the sacred claim of God. Such herald their utterances and offer their sacrifices in every place. But Paul did not belong to that class of reformers. He straightway preached in the synagogue. His Master entered into the synagogue, began, continued and ended His ministry in the synagogue, and he would follow Him. He would have a home where he could train, arm and send forth leaders who would inspire confidence and marshal the host of Israel against the forces of evil. This was Wesley's great power. Where are Whitfield's converts? Where Wesley's?

Just before a great battle in which 36,000 Prussians conquered 80,000 Austrians, Frederick the Great called his officers together and said: "The battle of to-morrow will decide great destinies. I

expect great things of your individual commands. If any of you feel afraid, step down and out and I will discharge you before you frighten others." None moved. "Then," said he, "I shall be in the front, in the rear and on the right and left; whomsoever I find doing his duty I will honor."

The Prince of all conquests has sent His apostles and ministers forth with like counsel. "Lo, I am with you unto the end of the earth." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I have overcome and am sat down with My Father in His throne." Oh, for an army of men like St. Augustine, whose double nature made him both Esau and Jacob. A student of Moses and Paul by night and Plato and Socrates by day; converted while reading the thirteenth and fourteenth verses of the thirteenth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. As he read and looked into that putting of sin and salvation he said: "This will lead me to death," but that will open a field for usefulness and hope, and though he was then thirty-two years old, yet he literally revolutionized the theology of the world. Oh, that we could realize the infinite possibilities which we lose by refusing to do as our fathers were wont to do. Think of Saul of Tarsus, from the human standpoint. A Jew by nature, a Pharisee by profession, with a thorn in the flesh. "What that was no one knows, so that all who fail may think they have it," and yet, touched by the power of God, he went forth to revolutionize the

whole world, and to-day is read in all languages, and his words are overturning systems, destroying superstitions and illuminating hearts in all the earth, while heaven gives him the highest seat in the Court of Judges. His circuit is greatly enlarged. He is now preaching glad tidings of great joy to the nations of the earth, neither is he wearied, oppressed, poor, deserted or defeated. Nay, all the combined forces of evil cannot silence one pulpit in which Jesus is preached according to Paul's conception of Him as the Son of God.

Saul of Tarsus was my ideal man. Of all the long list of Apostles and teachers, he stands at the head. He could not refrain from preaching. Conversion is sure to send such men forth as heralds of their new faith. Thousands halt here, knowing that if converted they would be forced by the law of consistency to herald the truth. This is not a lone case. God has always honored men of conviction when conversion identified them with His cause and His body. He found Constantine in York, but did nothing for him until he was converted. Luther in Wittenburg, Wesley in Epworth, Whitfield in Gloucester and Moody in Chicago; but they would never have been heard from had they not been converted. But when they entered the household of faith and were commissioned of God they went forth to immortalize themselves in deeds of mercy, and when stars cease to shine and the bell is tolled they will live. Mr. Moody while in Manchester, labored

long and patiently with a young man under just this fear. At last he yielded and, being converted, sat listening to Mr. Moody's explanation of a similar case, whereupon the young man sprang to his feet with great enthusiasm and said, "That's me, that's me." His conversion turned his whole life into another channel, and every power and energy of his being was henceforth thrown into the work of God. This conversion does for everyone. There is no law that measures the man more absolutely than the law of conversion. You see just what the man is spiritually by his movements. Oh! for an awakening to the awful responsibility resting on the sons and daughters of the triumphant hosts now in glory.

I have read of a mother who felt the struggle of her child and, looking, saw the child was dying in her arms in the church during the service. She sprang and called for help, and the child was saved by the skill of her physician. Brethren, this poor, lost world for which our Master endured the cross is dying in our arms. How can we be so indifferent? How can we refrain from crying unto our Great Physician, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto him? If we had the same definite sense of their destitution, we would be more in earnest. I remember in my childhood a man who startled the whole town one Sabbath morning, as he dashed through the streets with his horse covered with foam. He halted at the

door of our family physician, and the poor horse fairly staggered. Why so cruel to the beast? Because ten miles away that man's son was dying with cholera, and he must have a physician, nothing else was of any moment. We admired his earnestness and followed him with tearful eyes, and prayed that God would spare his boy. So to-day the great need of man is a sense of the vast issue of life; the feeling that "the King's business demands haste."

VII

SONSHIP.

"Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."—I John 3: 2.

These words are associated with some of the most sublime truths of holy record. They constitute one of the sublimest pictures found in the apostle's letters. We stand in the presence of the Sons of God, heirs of inexplorable wealth and endless increase. Pessimists and agnostics have used these words to support their theories of uncertainty and ignorance, but to the thoughtful they state a great fact and then give the reason why we, having that fact, cannot anticipate its accumulations. "We are now, Sons of God" and are to be all that that carries with it, plus what God can make of us, which will not appear until the pattern appears. This is true of all things subjected to the law of growth and development.

The newly-sown field cannot disclose the harvest to those who have never seen a field of ripened grain. No more can he who finds an egg or a little black seed. To him it is worthless. The seed must be sown, at the proper time, in prepared soil

and the sower must wait the product of growth, that the external forces and appliances may bring forth a stalk; which may be evidence of life, but what kind of life? That doesn't yet appear; it grows, but to what we know not. It doth not appear. Years later limbs appear, leaves, blossoms, and yet it doesn't appear; the apples take form; now we begin to see what is in the seed, and had we been familiar with the apple-seed we might have anticipated an apple and having knowledge of the apple tree we might have been able to have guarded it more thoroughly. So with the little globe I hold in my hand. We are tempted to break it, but we hear something pecking from within and a bird is hatched, but it doesn't appear what kind of a bird it is. It grows, it has the appearance of a dozen different kinds. We don't know whether it is an eagle or an owl; we must wait; it does not yet appear. On entering the art gallery, we see the artist at work upon the canvas. He spends half a day and it doesn't yet appear what he is going to do. I must have his ideal. Even then, after ye have knowledge of the seed, shell, ideal or child, no one can tell what the harvest is to be. There are enemies and perverting influences, such as we are not able to appreciate, measure, or even anticipate; hence it is impossible for us at all times, under all circumstances, to guard and protect the developing interests of the harvests and oft-times the most promising is utterly destroyed. The boy may grow, learn

and act, but soon his movements are checkmated, so that that which he would do, he does not. He struggles, breaks away, falls and rises alternately, until it becomes problematical where is he going, or what is he to be? "It doth not yet appear."

But some things are made to appear by having knowledge of the seed, egg, animal and being. When we know the seed to be apple, peach or orange, we have reason to expect apples, peaches or oranges. If we knew that the egg is that of a robin, sparrow or eagle, we should know what to look for. If the young animal is a monkey, pup, colt, or child then we look for the traits of the monkey, dog, horse, or man to appear in the development until the perfection of that animal is disclosed. Behold, now are we the Sons of God, what then must appear? Traits, aspirations and elements of the nature of God. We naturally look for a development of mind, the culturing of spirit, with capacity for suffering and enjoying, knowing and doing, regretting and glorying. And yet we cannot anticipate God, for he is going on and up through the natural to the supernatural and adding constantly to the field of revelation. There are hidden forces and agencies in the future that we are not in any position to appreciate. Nor can we tell what these intensified forces will do for us. By what method of thought could our fathers have anticipated a journey from Chicago to New York in eighteen hours; they talked about horses and trained them; occasionally found one that would go ten

miles in an hour, but not for many hours ; they talked about the canoe, the boat and the schooner of different models, of sails, and of how to utilize the gales and the tides, but they knew nothing of steam or electricity and had no standards by which to tell what either would do for them. They could not tell, it did not appear what the 20th century would bring to the race. They had no standard by which they could measure the life we now live, no more than we have to measure growth, culture and refinement in heaven, where all contaminating forces, friction and sin is forever excluded.

What is Cuba to be? We have knowledge of the formation, soil and people, but what is to be the staple of thought, religious conviction? What are they to learn first? We have no knowledge of God's ability to adjust appliances and helps to our future condition. We are morally certain we have the best aids and gifts God can devise at present and that he who withheld not His only begotten Son will see to it that His children have the best helps infinite wisdom can provide ; but as children we are not always in position to see this, but the fact remains, "that all things work together for good to them that love God." Paul summed up the grand possibilities in man when he wrote in the epistle to the Romans, "He that spared not his own Son but delivered Him up for us all how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Again: The glory can never appear until the

pattern appears. We shall never be just like Him until we see Him. Hence the one work of the church everywhere is to reveal, set forth or reproduce the life and spirit of Jesus in the flesh.

Ten thousand are living in an unconverted, disinterested state, because they have never seen what to them was the Jesus whom they seek. This is not strange. Factors and men linger in the pathway of men undisturbed and unemployed because we know not of their nature and power. Take as an illustration electricity with its subtle forces. It was a matter of discourse three hundred years before Christ, and yet no one dreamed of its power until centuries had multiplied and one Morse lifted into position for a practical display of its power to send thought by fire. Now cars fly like birds through our streets, night puts away its dark robes and distance disappears. So with men. In 1861 Governor Yates, of Illinois, said to Mr. Washburn: "Where can we find a man who knows how to organize our men into regiments for war?" "Why not call Grant, of Galena?" "Who is he? I have never heard of him." Thus twenty years before U. S. Grant held the world in his grasp and all nations delighted to honor him, he was unknown to the Governor of his own State. He had never been seen. This is emphatically true of Jesus, the Saviour of men. Men, women and children are waiting to see Him in the house, store, field, school and streets. To see His patience, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, humility, love and

ministry. He must be seen in authority and power. Authority does not always carry with it power, and it is power we need in order to win souls for Christ—a peculiar power. When Governor Yates commissioned Grant as Colonel of the 76th Illinois, I have no doubt he was as ready to down the rebellion as when he received Lee's sword at Appomattox but he was not in position and had he been commissioned as commander-in-chief he would not have had power. The people would have watched him with a jealous eye, but when he fought at Donnelson and won, at Pittsburg and gained a victory, at Shiloh, and triumphed in the wilderness and conquered before Richmond, the people came to see that he was the man, and had the war continued, we should have been going South one hundred thousand strong to-day. We had come to believe in Grant as a conqueror. That was his power. So when Jesus stood in the senate chamber of eternity He was willing to save the race, and in a sense He had the power, for He was the Son of God, but it became Him in bringing many sons to glory to be made perfect through suffering. He must climb the miraculous ladder from Bethlehem to Bethany in order that the people might see His power. He multiplied bread and then said "they shall hunger no more." He walked on the sea and then said "there shall be no more sea." He broke the seal of death and then said, "He that believeth in me shall never die." He laid down in death that He might say, "I am He that was dead,

but behold I am alive forevermore. I have opened a door and no man shall shut it." Because of this men believe in Him and His words live with potency. He established confidence in himself or ruin would have been inevitable. He must appear in sacrificial robes before men can believe in God unto salvation—on this rests the eternal purity and safety of heaven. In this mortal, thoughtful men find rest. He bore our stripes.

The necessity of this may be seen when we consider the strength of a kingdom, which is in the confidence of the subjects. For instance, Persia once enjoyed the best form of government on earth and had it been executed righteously, that kingdom would have prospered, but when demagogues undertook to put away their superiors and caused an act to be passed that no man should pray save to their king, they collided with a higher law, even that of the individual liberty of conscience. The penalty was death at the hands of the lions kept for that purpose. When the king found that he had signed the death warrant of his best man, he would have reversed the decision, but that would have unsettled the confidence of the whole kingdom, for if that decree be not carried out what reason had they to think any other would be? So when the king saw there was no way to maintain the confidence of the kingdom and save Daniel, he caused him to be thrown into the den of lions, but Daniel was larger than the lions. He stayed with them all night with-

out hurting a lion, without loosening a tooth, for they were not at fault, they were the executors of the law. He left them for the next violator of law, who had no righteousness to plead. Thus Daniel filled the law full, and the kingdom was saved, confidence maintained and all honored. When the demagogues found that the lions had not injured Daniel they declared: "The lions must have been tampered with. The king said: "We will test it," and throwing into the den his accusers they were craunched before their bodies reached the bottom of the pit. So when the law was written over the archway of heaven, "the soul that sinneth it shall die," every intelligence in the universe demanded that that law be filled full, and Jesus came forth, laid down in death suffered it to do its utmost, but did not hurt it, nor did death hurt him, for he arose chaining death, hell and the grave to his chariot wheel to ascend on high, and the law was filled full to the letter and all who go into death in Christ will find only a shadow; but he who goes in without him will find death as awful, its sting as terrible as it ever was. "Put ye on therefore the Lord Jesus Christ." "O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is Thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Again: We shall never glory in the resurrection until Christ appears in His glorified robes. Don't talk to me of the resurrection in the absence of that

glorification which is to take out the wrinkles, remove the bands and burnish the old form so that it shall possess all that the architect designed it to have. When Christ shall appear we shall see Him as Peter, James and John saw Him on the mount of transfiguration. That is what Paul meant when he wrote: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye," changed into the glorious form and beauty of His most glorious body. Not until then will death be swallowed up in victory. Then, when all that we lost in Adam, every band, limitation and chain is removed, then shall mortals be satisfied, for they shall awake in His likeness.

What do we mean by seeing God? It is being transformed by His spirit who taketh of the things of God and revealeth them unto us until we see the nature of God. The artist sees in the pictures what the amateur never sees. The experienced sculptor sees in the stone that which the inexperienced eye would never discern. The experiences of the past are sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind that God will exhaust every resource known in heaven or on earth before one of His children shall fall short of the pattern adopted or appear before the throne ill-fitted for Heaven's best places. It is for His glory that His children shall see Him and become like Him, and only such can see Him as are like Him, and only such can be like Him as do see Him, hence the force of the Apostle's language,

changed from glory to glory by the spirit while beholding Him as in a glass. He has joyously rewarded every effort in this line even to the gift of a cup of cold water. I have read with delight and comfort of the tall angels sent out to guard the footsteps of Pilate's wife as she wandered over the high mountains of Switzerland in banishment thus rewarded for the words she spake on the night of Jesus' betrayal in Jerusalem, and in this I note the tenderness with which God seeks every opportunity to reward every act of those who seek to know Jesus or every good intention on the part of His children.

Man's haste forbids the appearance of that work which fullness of time will bring about. God never gets in a hurry; He has all eternity in which to accomplish His plans. Hence a thousand years are as one day when it is passed, or as a watch in the night. When you think of His taking eighty years to equip a man for forty years' work, and suffering a nation to linger in the crucible for seventy years while He created a man with sufficient nerve and conviction to pen the Emancipation Bill, and kept nations at war for four thousand years while the angels laid the tracks and prepared the way for the King of Peace, we are amazed at the long delay, and at first wonder why this could not have been brought about sooner; but when the work is in hand and we note the work for which they were prepared and the necessary elements and conditions brought into

the history, we are ready to say it was in the fullness of time, in every case, and confidently look for God to give all the time necessary for the fullest and most perfect revelation possible to the individual member. He has given the lily all needed time for a perfect display of its glory. Ten thousand years could not add one iota to the perfection of the lily; so with the forest, with beasts and birds. There were oxen and horses in the days of our fathers as perfect as they can ever be; they have had ample time for their perfection. He directs and overrules in view of perfection in these matters. He speaks to the birds of the forest and when the forests become leafless, they wing their way to southern groves, and in the sunshine of that land become perfect in song and plumage. Now he hath created a desire in the human heart that is voiced in the old hymn:

“There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night
And pleasures banish pain.”

And that desire will have all needed time for its accomplishment and realization. This is one of the strongest collateral evidences of man's immortality. It is clear to every man who has given this subject any thought that no one has ever yet lived long enough in this world to become perfect according to the standard set forth in God's revealed purpose. Take an express train and travel a mile a minute

over lines where there are no strikes for twenty million centuries, and you will still be within the circle of man's discovery. And this circle is stored with unexplored interests, waiting for some man to have time enough to examine carefully and microscopically all the interests therein. More, these interests are like star-dust, out of which systems of unchanging beauty may be formulated. It is true, "the heavens declare the glory of God," but man, who is to be like Him, desires to see the glory of God and can never be content with beholding the glory of the heavens. The standard is set very high. Most of us would be delighted to be like Moses or Miriam, Daniel or Hannah, Isaiah or Jeremiah; Peter, James or John, Mary or Salome, Paul or Barnabas, yet none of these are held up as our pattern, nay, the pledge is that we are to be like God.

Poor, fault-finding skeptics, starving to death on the faults of Christians and criticizing the imperfections of men, wait until God says: "I'm done, I'm well pleased." Then look on the old saint in the light of the throne, bannered and burnished for the Courts of the Redeemed. Wait till we outgrow the environments and discords and warped conditions with inherited weaknesses and false lights. Wait until God takes His child through the higher courses, and spends a few centuries where chips never fall, and discipline gives place to inspiration, then look while He takes out regiment after regi-

ment and forms brigades, divisions and armies on the sea of glass. Wait till God puts on parade that which now appears in the first-fruits of the Resurrection, these the armies of the living God with palms of victory and the Sons of Grace will march to music that has been perfected in melody and harmony, for then shall we be like Him when we see Him as He is.

This is the crowning glory put upon creative wisdom. John was permitted to lean on the bosom of Jesus until the perfected revelation of divine glory was made known through the transfiguration in the Mount. Later in life he wrote: "That which we have seen declare we unto you that your joy may be full." Now wherein is our joy made full, in this, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another," that is "fellowship with God and the blood of His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Other works of creation are beautiful and gifted, but none share the honor of heirship or possess the nature of that hope which works purification until the person becomes as pure as is God. The grass of the field is beautiful. It is a garment of beauty for the eye and speaks the glory of God. The lily is clothed in garments more glorious than the robes of Solomon, and yet it has no struggle, toil, forethought or anxiety. The rose is full of speech, its sweetness is thrown upon the desert air. The eagle manifests strength and majesty, and soars away

with a sublimity that is perfectly grand, and yet no one ever thinks of associating it with family relations as adoptable. The ox is handsome, the lion is majestic, and yet the distance from the grandest king of the forest up to the most helpless infant of the age is immeasurable.

No one ever thought of adopting into the human family a beast or a bird. They are not susceptible of being adopted, but man possesses the possibility and nature of adoption into the family of Diety and may even while I speak this hour, be touched by the fire of the Holy Ghost and regenerated and made to conform to the life, power, majesty and glory of the Infinite, because he was created in that image and as the coin, worn and defaced, may be reminted, so the soul, sin-blighted, sin-cursed and sin-destroyed, may be regenerated by the Holy Ghost into the image of the Eternal King by looking unto Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, until we are changed from glory to glory.

VIII

SATAN'S ADMISSION AND MISTAKE.

"Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.—Job I: 9-12.

These are the words of the devil and therefore they are not the words of inspiration. I do not know that he was ever inspired to say or do anything. He has said and done some things worthy of retention and those selected to collate and bring forth the book were inspired to embody those words in this ancient and beautiful poem. Satan's position and activity put him in possession of some things men and angels know nothing about—things that enabled him to be very successful in his pursuits.

Again, he speaks from the standpoint of an enemy, and next to a genuine friend is an outspoken enemy. A friend may so flatter as to cause you to think you are the only perfect man, while, in fact, you are the weakest; weak enough to be flattered. Elijah lost his head and heart so fully as to think he was the only man left uncaptured by Satan. He wanted to die that he might get with

holy men, when there were thousands who had never bent the knee before idols. Treasure what your enemy says. He may set forth things that are true, but which no other ever told for fear of losing your friendship or grieving you.

Who was this man Job? Of his kinsmen and neighbors we know very little. They never came near enough to God to be known. He had one wife; he may have had more, but one appeared, spoke foolishly and disappeared. It would have been better for her reputation if she had never been known. He had ten children who gave him great anxiety, and were all swept away in a cyclone. His neighbors seem to have been of the different schools of philosophy and to have said many wise things, but untimely and inappropriately. But of Job volumes have been and are still to be written. He was a man of great wealth, a political leader of his day and honored among men. He was taken into companionship, communion and fellowship with God; was told of God's purpose in establishing springs for artesian flowing; the design of the bands of Orion, moved with the Father amid the sweet influences of the Pleiades. He was scholarly enough to accompany his Maker through the morning hours of time. My soul stands in awe as I read the facts set forth in the thirty-eighth chapter. God seemed to delight in introducing his son Job on occasions as the one perfect man who feared Him and eschewed evil. One day when the Sons of God

came together, Satan appeared. God called his attention to the perfection of his son Job: Have you ever noticed that there are none like him in all the earth, a perfect servant. I have often wondered if God had any feeling of delight or gratification in presenting His child as fitted for all positions and criticisms. I have read and reread of the return of George Washington after he had led the heroic army out of winter quarters at Valley Forge and forced Lord Cornwallis to surrender and go home, for America had taken her place among the nations of the earth. Philadelphia threw open her windows, door and streets to welcome the conqueror. Illuminations, decorations and music were without stint. Men and women wept for joy and shouted over their victories, but down yonder in the quiet Mt. Vernon home sat the mother of the hero, who when asked if she had heard the particulars said: "No, but I shall know soon, for George will come to me first"—and so he did. Leaning over her tenderly, and kissing her cheek, the hero said: "Your letters and prayers have been my constant inspiration." That fond mother replied: "Son, I knew I could trust you." So our Heavenly Father looked on Job in every succeeding conflict, while philosophers theorized, and Satan tempted and his wife begged him to curse God and die. He knew he could trust him. No matter what forces or temptations were applied, God knew His son and was not anxious. "He is a perfect man and, Satan, you know it. He eschew-

eth evil and feareth God." All of this Satan admits without a single word of objection. Yes, that is so. He is a perfect man. Perfect in what—as a business man? No; not one word is said about his great wealth. As a politician? No; although his sagacity was readily acknowledged among men. Ah, no; God knew that Job had riches immeasurable, and that wisdom which cometh down from above; gold tried in the fire until the dross had all been consumed. I have been lifted from out the valley of humiliation into the peaks of the mountains, swept by the breezes of heaven, laden with the blossoms of the vineyard now growing on the banks of the river of life, and longed for one touch of the heart of my Father, but God designed that we should weave all the good things of this world into a character to be burnished and bannered for glory. That can never be accomplished until the fires are kindled, for it is affliction that worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. In the crucible we are to be changed from glory to glory.

In what was Job perfect? Character for service. Job is a perfect servant—not a perfect man. You will never see a perfect man in this world, for that implies perfect wisdom and all knowledge. Service requires perfect obedience and perfect love. It does not require much talent to obey and love perfectly. Job was perfect in that he feared God and eschewed evil. Now in all the Book you will find this rule

holds good. When God first began His inspection of men, He called upon Abraham and said to him: "It is time you stopped your meandering and began to walk before Me perfectly." When Jesus closed His great sermon on the mountain He said to His disciples: "What do ye more than others if you love those only who love you? What evidence is that that you are of God? The perfection of your Father is in that He loves His enemies, even so love ye. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Just here poor humanity limps and questions the possibility of such a life or condition while passing through this world of sin. To the more thoughtful and confident the question of possibility is settled in the requirement, and in the fact that God has prepared and set forth a perfect system of life in Christ Jesus, and undertaken a perfect application of that system at the hand of the Holy Ghost. What, then, remains to secure perfect results? Perfect material and perfect surrender to God's plan and purpose. Thank God, our Father never requires at our hand more than we can render. He does require perfection in our service. Every writer has so declared. Peter set before the world the claim for a whole and perfect service. Paul prayed for the sanctification of the Church at Thessalonica, and then added, "Faithful is he who hath called you, who also will do it." Can we doubt? Satan did not question it for one minute. He admitted it was possible for a man to walk up-

rightly. That question over which the Church is still quibbling was settled three thousand years ago in heaven and hell, and so announced by the Father and admitted by his Satanic majesty. Men can live and serve God perfectly in this sin-cursed world.

Further, let me say the world demands that Christians should live right in this world. The world demands that God's people present a life of peace and contentment. God has said He will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him. The surface life may not be a representation of peace, because the fires that refine bring the dross to the surface and allow the gold and silver to fall. The Christian in this world is in a state of trial and discipline. He is being tested. But while the sea is lashed into great billows and angry foam, there is a point not very far down, where there is neither ripple nor motion; so with the Christian there may be ripples on the surface, but if our hearts are fully consecrated there will be an inward peace as serene as the ocean's depths, where the influence of the wild winds and waves never come. Do not allow appearances to deceive you. Wait until the dross is all removed and the pure gold is wrought into the image of the purifier, for we shall never see God until the perfect work is wrought in us. Amiability may admit us to society, education and accomplishments may admit to the cultured circles, wealth may give a man position, profession admit them to the church; but possession

alone admits to the Holy of Holies. Argument may be overthrown, persuasion resisted, appeal scorned, but holiness is truth embodied. Such will send forth like the spring on the mountain-side a perpetual source of refreshment and blessing all around, manifesting itself in gentleness, love, kindly deeds, helpful acts. May God help us to rise to the privilege of full consecration that we may enter into that experience which is abiding.

Hast thou considered my servant Job? He is unlike all other men. There is none like him in all the world. What! Were there no other men who feared God? Oh, yes; the sons of God were there, but Job had advanced and received another work in him unlike all others. "Oh, I do not believe in any second work of grace! God does not do His work imperfectly. He does a perfect work every time." Yes; I believe that when a man is born into God's kingdom or family it is a perfect birth, conversion or regeneration, although the child may be a very weak offspring because of weaknesses inherited and environments suffered. He may give the family great trouble, but the birth is perfect and the life is perfect. What will the possessor do with that new possession? Will he consecrate it perfectly to God? Certainly that would be a reasonable thing to do. But have you all done that? If so, you will get a new experience by being perfectly sanctified at the hand of God. God cannot sanctify a sinful life; "but know that the Lord hath set apart him that is

godly for himself." We must first be born into His kingdom. The sinner's cry is for pardon when conviction settles down into his soul. When pardon comes and condemnation is removed his shout is that of joy for sins forgiven, condemnation removed. He sings

"My God is reconciled;
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child;
I can no longer fear;
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And, "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

Now, that man is not sanctified; nor is it possible for him to be until he consecrates that new life to the service of his newly-found Father. God would never call the attention of devils, men or angels to him as having that which none other have. No, he is no more perfect than Jesus was when He first appeared in the theophanes of military power before the gate of that ancient city to direct Joshua, or in His friendliness to Abraham. Even Christ himself must be made perfect through suffering, and God can never be satisfied with His children until they are made perfect, "for whom He called He predestinated that they should be conformed to the image of His son." All of which Satan admitted. If it behooved Jesus to be made perfect through suffering, how can we expect to be like Him without suffering with Him. Our Father loves us too much to permit us to go through this world without dis-

cipline and suffering. He purposes that every form and order of intelligences should know of His power to save under the most trying and diabolical conditions. Thank God, for showing the worlds, hell, earth and heaven one man who could be holy in a whirlwind of disaster and a cyclone of destruction. I am glad to be numbered among those who believe in a system that has produced one man like Job. Satan was forced to believe all that was claimed for Job by his Father. Job did not thrust himself into notice, nor was he called forth by his friends. God said, "Have you considered my servant Job?"

Here the devil made his great mistake by thinking he personally could destroy one of God's perfected men or children. "Hadst thou not hedged him about and shut him in, prospered and enriched him, he would have stumbled on the dark mountains as others do. It is not from principle that Job serves thee, but for the spoils." It is true that God's servants are hedged about more perfectly than any other. He has the means and armies at His command; so that there are no surprises, no delays, no mistakes. Again, He can enrich them more rapidly and to a greater extent than any other. It is as easy for God to throw one hundred bushels of wheat to the acre as ten or twenty, for His resources are inexhaustible. Satan knew full well that God was doing a business that warranted surer and larger dividends than he could afford to promise. Satan is often reckless in his promises and has many things

to offer, for I do not believe, as some of my brethren do, that Satan has nothing to give. He has certainly the controlling interest in many new homes and cities, and is running to-day the greatest monopoly of this country, and very few question his right. But he is dealing with a merchandise that is perishable. God deals with the imperishable, and by the enforcement of such principle as must result in wealth, for all God's people must be industrious, prudent, acquisitive and persevering. Hence the strength of Satan's criticism. God had so thoroughly hedged Job about as to forbid Satan's approach. He had so enriched him as to remove the strength of temptation, and this, my brethren, He will do for any of us. Has He not said, "I will go with thee and give thee rest from all thine enemies, and thou and thy children shall dwell in safety in the land whither thou goest." Did not Isaiah see "the Mighty to save," coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, traveling in the greatness of His strength, and rejoice. Has not the Psalmist written, "He shall surely deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers and under His wing shalt thou trust. Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night nor of the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction at noonday; a thousand shall fall by thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee; only

with thine eye shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord thy refuge, even the Most High thy habitation: there shall be no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." Was not Satan right? Did not Elisha find the mountains round about Dothan filled with horsemen and chariots and say "they that be for us are more than all they that can be against us?" Surely, "our God doth know how to deliver His people out of all their temptations and reserve the remainder for judgment." But these things do not come as a reward, but as a result. Christians do not serve God for the spoils, not for what we are to get, but what we are to be. Hence, men of God count it all joy when they fall into temptation, knowing that temptation worketh patience, and patience when it is perfected faith not for Job's sake, nor the Father's gratification, but for the good of the race.

God suffered Satan to mount the chariot of wind and harness the steeds of fire and ride forth in his work of desolation until poor Job was homeless, penniless and childless—but still sinless. We read that through his tears he cries, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." "In all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly." Then Satan said, "All that a man hath will he give for his life; put forth Thine hand and touch his flesh and he will curse Thee to Thy face." And the Lord said, "Behold, he is in thy hand," and

Satan diseased and tormented the poor man until he became loathsome and his friends wished that he might die. Even the wife of his bosom urged him to curse God and die. But listen, up from the parched lips, from beneath the matted hair, comes the sublimest sentiment of the ages: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Not in view of the spoils, they are all gone, but faith cried out of the darkness and up from the ash-bed: "Move on; farewell, friends; leave me in the ashes until the fires go out, if there I may learn of the higher law of life." Love only can beget that perfect loyalty which in darkest hours can trust God and move on. I am not sure Job knew what was going on, but God did, and Job dared trust. The cricket on the hillside cannot enjoy and may not understand the thundering of the hoofs and the crunching of the plowshare that sends His chariot rolling and tumbling over the hillside, even to the meadow's edge; but the plowman does, for he is preparing for a great harvest. So our God had a sublime reason in His mind when He surrendered Job to the touch of Satan. Yea, He wanted a man on whom generations might look, one in whom grace, having had a fair chance, was more than a match for Satan and all his agencies.

How do we obtain this grace? By living and acting in the line of duty. Lord Craven was living in London during a serious epidemic and became very much alarmed. To avoid all danger he re-

solved to go to his country seat. His coach and six were accordingly at the door, his baggage placed and all things in readiness for his journey. As he was walking through his hall, with hat on, cane under his arm and putting on his gloves ready to step into his carriage, he overheard his negro who served him as postillion, say to another servant, "I suppose by my Lord's quitting London to avoid the plague that his God lives in the country and not in the town." The poor negro said this in the simplicity of his heart, as he himself believed in a plurality of gods. The speech, however, struck Lord Craven very sensibly and made him pause. "My God," thought he, "lives everywhere and can preserve me in town as well as in the country. I will stay where I am. The ignorance of that negro has just now preached me a very useful sermon. Lord, pardon this unbelief and that distrust of Thy providence, which made me think of running away from Thy hand." He immediately ordered the horses to be taken from the coach and the baggage to be taken in. He remained in London, was remarkably useful among his sick neighbors and never became a victim of the disease. "The path of duty is the only path of safety." But the Scriptures teach more than a hedge, for it proffers protection in all our journeying. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." An English tradesman having always a large sum of money on his person left Bristol en route for London, but was taken ill and com-

pelled to abandon the trip. Years afterwards a criminal about to be hung said to him: "Do you remember starting for London and having to stop because of illness?" "Perfectly well, sir." "It is well for you that you did not go. I, with others, knowing of your intention and possessions, had planned to murder you and take the money." Thus God interposes and saves His people. In 1743 John Wesley was dragged by a mob of the town and savagely beaten. "Knock him down; kill him; crucify him!" shouted the mob. After a time he began to pray aloud and the leader of the mob, a beer-garden prize fighter, was so affected by his prayer that he immediately took his part and led him to his lodgings. Soon after John and Charles Wesley returned to Warsaw and took this man into the society. Charles asked him what he thought of his brother John. "Think of him," said the converted prize fighter, "I knew when so many of us could not kill one man that God must be with him."

Our Father delights in the perfection of His children. When Greece wanted a statue she summoned her chief artist. He called together all the most beautiful models of the kingdom. The perfect features of each were transferred to the marble, thus giving to the world the most beautiful form ever seen or of which poets had dreamed. It is said of Michael Angelo that when finishing his masterpiece a brother artist called on him and found him finishing a statue. He admired it, wondered at

the skill of the sculptor. He had occasion to call on him again some six months later and found him at work upon the same piece. "What," said the stranger, "are you still at work on that statue?" "Yes; I have retouched that and polished this in order that I might soften the expression and strengthen that muscle." "These are mere trifles," said the stranger. "Yes; but trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle," said the great sculptor. When the statue was finished the work became the admiration of all Greece; yea, for a time, all the world. So God hath sought to make provision for the perfection of His children and lifted before the world at different times works of perfection; but if you would reach the highest model of perfect life keep before the mind the perfect Jesus, the Son of God, who, being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Fix this picture in the mind and keep singing:

Oh, for a heart to praise my God,
 A heart from sin set free;
 A heart that always feels thy blood
 So freely spilt for me.

A heart in every thought renewed;
 And full of love divine;
 Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,
 A copy, Lord, of thine.

We must not forget that it's the little things of life that help to round out the perfect character which is to be presented without spot or wrinkle with great joy.

IX

DISPOSING OF ANNOYANCES.

“And when the fowls came upon the carcasses Abram drove them away.”—Gen. 15: 11.

There are a great many valuable lessons gathered into little nuggets, fossils and sentences, many of which go undisturbed for ages then are caught up, opened and made to appear in new robes, with new gifts. The event recorded by the words of my text appears from out the distance, across the sea of Time, among a cluster of names and deeds so insignificant as not to interest the casual reader, he passes by the whole story; yet it contains some of the best suggestions of Old Testament record. It is a note from the fort of universal worship. An old Greek historian once said: “In all my travels and reading, I have never found a people without priests, altars and places of worship. I have found them without property or dwellings, literature or art, or even a knowledge of history; but even then they had some system of worship. So we find in this record a form of worship. Abram, who had received many favors at the hand of God, sought an interview that he might give thanks for all kindnesses, and on being told if he would build an altar

and select birds and beasts and a place on which to offer them, God would meet him. He did as he was told and then sat down to watch his offering lest it be polluted by the carnivorous birds. In this we note our Father's interest in the details of worship. He would that all men have a place of worship, a specific place for the offering of his service, whither he may invite, yea, gather the children from the storm. This renders every item of service in God's house of sufficient importance to command the attention of all present. Anything worth doing is worth doing well, especially where it is of divine appointment. We recognize this law in minor details. We simply tolerate the business man who has no particular place of business or identification with any system to which he feels himself answerable. Such men are either afraid of their methods, or have none. So in all lines of organized work. He who sought a place and enlisted in the army because he wanted to serve his country was worth a score of that class who happened to be in the swim and enlisted because others did and were sorry as soon as the excitement passed over. Such were always a burden to the army when in battle or movement.

All battles, carnal and spiritual, should be fought in that spirit. The Prince of all Conquerors said: "To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with Me in my throne, even as I have overcome and am sat down with my Father at His throne." This gives all acts and deeds value and significance. The

offering of two mites was equal to the best, because it was the widow's best. She knew, and God knew, and each knew that the other knew. The small becomes large by this law. In an English dockyard a great ship was to be launched. An immense multitude assembled to see it glide down the slides; the blocks and wedges were knocked away, but the great hull did not stir and there was disappointment. Just then a little boy ran forward and began to push the ship with all his might. The crowd broke out in a laugh of ridicule. The ship began to move. It needed just the pound the boy could push, that's all. But it would not have moved without that or its equivalent. So in every day parade, review or battle; perfection depends upon the best every man can offer. The perfection of the whole can never be reached without the perfection of the individual members of the company, regiment, brigade, division or corps, hence the importance of caring for details. No great achievement was ever won by men who were careless at this point. Napoleon furnishes a striking illustration of this fact. In times of greatest excitement, when the world was studying his plans, he was giving direction and attention to the shoeing of his horses and selecting saddles and shoes for horses and men. In one of his greatest campaigns, at a time when the army was in imminent danger, he wrote an under-officer the following letter: "Your returns are not clear. I do not see the position of General Gardanne's division,

or his force. I do not see companies that belong to the army of Naples; this carelessness will at least endanger the army and embarrass its administration and destroy its discipline. Send me perfectly accurate returns. The returns of my armies form the most agreeable portion of my library." The same is true of Wellington, and our own Sherman and Thomas. The correspondence from the army of Sherman shows that for months before he made the great march from Atlanta to the Sea, he was studying the country through which he was to go, its resources and supplies, in order that he might provide for his men and horses.

We have an evidence of that irresistible impulse to come into the presence of some Supreme Ruler, arising perhaps from a sense of fear and curiosity to know him who is and is not seen. Surrounded by mystery and uncertainties and impressed with the fact of an onward march, man longs to know who or what it is that controls these irresistible forces that play around and through him. But the event gives more than an impulse; it presents a system of worship that contains every element of strength and fitness yet discovered. The altar is simple in its construction; thrown together in the field by the implements of an ordinary shepherd, consisting of earth and rocks, but it is an altar, in keeping with the civilization, place and age. It is what that age required. Every place of worship ought to be established on that principle; anything more or less is

an imperfection, for it detracts rather than helps the worshiper.

Some one has said: "It is easy to see why Abram worshiped at the altar with birds and beasts for his sacrifice. Location and study governs religious development. The Chaldean turned his attention to the heavens, became a worshiper of the Sun. Why? Because the Sun was the greatest and most powerful of all the heavenly bodies. This fact led him to worship the sun, moon and stars. Out of this has grown that system of astrology that brings us our knowledge of astronomy. Turn to Egypt, and you find nature worship. Somehow the overflowing of the Nile gives yearly a fertilizing energy to the soil such as causes it to bring forth abundantly. Because of these forms in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, the Egyptian goes beyond the form to the giver of energy and becomes a worshiper of that mysterious power we call life as it appears in forms. He deifies animals and forms that to his mind best represent his conception of the first Great Cause. India rises a little higher. The Hindoo looks on all eminence as coming from some great First Cause, whom they call god. Any man swinging out on the current from deific centers must return by encountering the current and getting back to the eminence from which the influence started."

We find in this scene a recognition of that demand for a mediator which is found everywhere.

Israel said: "Let not God speak to us lest we die, but let Moses speak for him." Job said to his counsellors "There is no daysman betwixt us who can lay his hand on both of us." The experiences and theories of ages have not changed that feeling. Men everywhere seek some man to speak for them, and when a sense of wrong fills the heart of the seeker he seeks the best he can find. This appears on every page of history, according to the nature of the civilization in which they live. We approach with boldness the throne of grace. Why? Because we have knowledge of an high priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He has tasted death for every man, and is therefore our propitiation, prepared from the foundation of the world, but waited for the fullness of time that he might be manifested in the flesh, waiting for a sufficient growth in the conception of God's will, and the tests of man's ability to meet the demands of his own nature so as to make it possible for him to accomplish the purpose of Deity. Some may ask, why might not this simple form of worship have been kept up throughout all ages? Simply because God designed every form of worship to be elevating and educative, hence it is the duty of the worshiper to elevate and inspire the people with whom he lives. We hear much about the church coming to the people and mingling with the people, but all that talk originates with those who do not want to improve—

hence they want a form of worship in keeping with their tastes.

The first object is and should be the erection of standards. Every song, sermon or prayer should lift the standard and then inspire the seeker to reach it. He who can meet the people where they live and elevate them in heart and life is meeting the demand and accomplishing the design of the gospel. There are places in every community where God's saints live in luxury, walk on softest tapestries and drink their water out of silver and golden cups. Now, if I should go there and they gave me water in a rusty, half-worn cup, I should feel insulted, and the water would not taste good. On the other hand, if I called at a poor man's house, where there were none of these luxuries, but all drank from the tin cup and slept on a straw mat, and they were to borrow or purchase a silver cup for me, I would feel grieved, for I would rather drink with them from the old tin cup. It is water that slakes the thirst in either case and the means are simply the medium; but that should be natural, not strained. So with true worshipers. It is God's grace that saves men and means should be employed to bring the needy and Saviour together. Hence, he who makes the means least objectionable "without sacrifice of principle," to the largest number of people, is most successful in pleasing God. Who first devised the scheme to rescue fallen men? The poet sings:

"Hail sovereign grace that first began

The scheme to rescue fallen men;
Hail, matchless, free, eternal grace
That gives my soul a hiding place."

Again, we find here the element necessary in all true worship. That which is essential to all religious duty: obedience. "He obeyed God." That is all God asks to-day. How shall I secure pardon? Obey God. How be sanctified? Obey God. How grow in grace? Obey God. No display of art can take the place of obedience in any form of worship that has the glory of God for its object. Build the most magnificent church on earth, bring into it the grandest choir, with the most brilliant and eloquent orator and pious leader, and unless the people obey, the worship is a failure. Our children may do many things, but nothing is so bad or hurts so much as disobedience. But while all this is true, nevertheless that primitive form of worship would not be pleasing to God to-day. We must have forms of worship through which perfect obedience can adjust itself to the varied conditions of life in which we live and worship. Every student must see that it was perfectly legitimate that the old worship of the Hebrews should be done away with. It was perfectly legitimate that the old Roman system of worship should be superseded by the Reformation. The cold, dead condition of the church one hundred and fifty and two hundred years ago made it perfectly proper that that cold, dead system of worship should pass away and be superseded by the warm, glowing

spiritual energy of Methodism. It was perfectly legitimate. But when we tell you that if your Methodism loses its flexibility, if your Methodism loses its power of adjustment to the everchanging conditions of human society, the church does not keep step with the growth of human intelligence, and the development of human institutions, it will become a thing of the past, something else will and should take its place. You think that is the strangest, the wildest thing a man can say, and yet nothing can be more certain than that. If our form is to last, it must adjust itself to the ever-varying conditions of human life. It must have intelligence enough to be at the front of human thinking in every grand and great movement of the times. It must have sympathy enough to take hold of the great throbbing heart of humanity and make that heart feel its warmth and its heaven-born energy, and unless it can touch the two extremes of human society, something else, somewhere, will have to take its place. So if the people do not go to church to-day as they did 100 years ago, if the churches are empty, if the pews are vacant, if the masses are found elsewhere, do not blame the people, infidelity, philosophy or the changed conditions in industrial life. There is no one thing to be blamed. The fact is, the churches do not furnish the people what they need and are looking for.

But further. We find that annoyances come to all worshipers. Be the service ever so sincere, and

the act in keeping with the strictest form of obedience set forth in the text, every one is sure to be annoyed. Birds of annoyance come unbidden into our houses of worship. The old patriarch was pained by the presence of the birds flying down and attempting to light on the sacrifice. As to the nature of those birds we know but little more than what is here stated—they were attracted by the blood. They were carnivorous in their nature. They may not have been in themselves contaminating, but annoying. So has it been with worshipers ever since Abraham drove the birds away and Job called the saints together in the land of Uz. Christians have been annoyed by the presence of birds who seek to pollute the sacrifice they bring. These birds may not be in themselves evil, but distracting and disturbing; their presence is in itself annoying. The hour with God in the closet is often invaded by thoughts, plans, promises and duties such as clip man's wings and prevent his flight toward God. In church you try to forget that you promised to meet Jones at ten o'clock Monday morning for a sail or ride, but again and again you have gone over the scene, anticipating all the pleasures of the occasion. Even while the minister was praying or the choir was singing, your thought was busy about other people's business and matters over which you had no control, or in which you had no responsibility. Like a swarm of locusts, these distracting thoughts shut out God's light, and left you in utter dark-

ness. Not in themselves evil, but if cherished, suffered to remain, they monopolize the hour of worship; but it is in the closet, at the prayer-meeting, Sunday-school or church service that they will do you no good. I have known Christian men who were so absorbed in building a new house as to carry their plans to church with them, and think of them during service. The minute service was over, instead of seeking out the stranger and making him welcome, get some friend, take him aside, and show him the plans of the new house. There is no escape; come they will, and unbidden. John, the dwarf, used to say he would climb up into the presence of the angels and so escape the distraction of thought. One day he left all and hurried away into the wilderness beyond the steps of men, and there in solemn silence he lingered in hunger and cold, but still distracted with thoughts of starvation, he returned and knocked at the door of his home and was asked: "Who is there?" And when he answered: "John, your brother," the answer came, "No, no; the younger son John went to live with the angels to get away from distracting thoughts." "Ah, it is I, the thoughts followed me and I have returned." Like the birds on newly-sown fields, evil thoughts come and beset the most active minds. Flying over these minds they seek to pervert and destroy the best impressions left by God's messengers, and they often form the strongest battery for evil that Satan has. They come with just the shade

of doubt most plausible to the worshiper, or the suggestion which is most misleading. He may have just ceased praying when the evil one asks: "Didn't I pray well that time. I guess they will think I am one of the elect." The Evil One often tells men they have prayed, preached or sung well, when no one else ever finds it out. "I tell you, you have preached to-day and the church will be looking after you with offers of a better position or more salary." (But they never come). Failing in this, they often make a man believe that God is dealing hard with him, and all his brethren are against him. They never speak of his works as of others, and often out of all the flock this bird is doing most with a certain class of sensitive hearts which are so constructed that any praise given to another is construed into a slur on them. A word of appreciation for (Williams) is a word of depreciation for (Clark). I have read of a Greek soldier who killed himself trying to destroy a monument erected to the memory of a comrade who fell in battle where he had fought and escaped. He could not look on that monument, for it said to him: "They don't appreciate you or what you did because you were not killed." So, night after night, he would work undermining the foundation of that monument, and one night it fell, and in that fall he was crushed. So will it be with him who suffers evil thoughts concerning others. He will soon perish in the midst of his own evil thoughts. Many a sensitive man has died because of criticisms never

uttered (hear-says) but never spoken, to him as real as the burning sun. One of Athens' artists was so much afraid of criticism that he caused to be written over his studio: "'Tis no hard thing to represent me, but let him who would blame me mend me." And the only criticism I ever allowed myself to think of is from a man I know means to help me, rather than to find fault, as some who haven't anything else to do. And every man who lives for God may think himself dead to criticism, yet if he thinks about it he will suffer because of it, and his suffering can do no possible good. Then we are not so dead as we think we are. I am often reminded of the pastor who, while sitting in his study, heard the cry, "John's in the well!" The next cry was, "John is dead! John is dead!" He ran, and, leaning over the curb asks, "John, are you dead?" "Yes, sir, I am." "Well," said the pastor, "I am glad to hear it from your own lips." Thus every Christian knows full well that evil thoughts will flock around him. To deny it is evidence of the Devil's satisfaction with him. Hence he has called in his aides. He followed Jesus even to the cross on which he died, and there said to him: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Yes, if you ever reach the celestial city, you will be able to see the track over which you came.

But here we learn how to treat these annoyances. Abram drove them away. He could not help the birds flying overhead, but he could forbid their light-

ing upon his sacrifice. Lorenzo Dow once said: "We cannot help the birds flying over our heads, but we can prevent their building nests in our hair." This is the only safe way for any man, for he who entertains errors will become evil. Many have taken evil into their minds to examine, weigh, refute and overthrow, but have been overthrown themselves. Why, the chips fell into their own souls and the mind became pregnant with the nature of the evil they entertained. Hence, there is one thing we must decide to do—either have nothing to do with evil, or take the chance of the tests. Some men seem bent on testing everything, all things, but he who undertakes to test the tides will sooner or later meet the fate of Webb, the famous swimmer, who tried to overcome Niagara's current. The only safety is in driving evil of all kinds away, and the quicker the decision is made, the better it will be for us and for those to whom we minister. We cannot afford to entertain evil for one moment, for the entertainment will weaken and sadden the heart and often embitter the spirit. For instance, suppose you allow yourself to think that your friend is not true. You will recall readily many things that strengthen the thought, and soon you have wronged your friend and belittled yourself. The thought has taken root in the soil and ever after little roots of jealousy spring up in the mind. But when such suggestion comes, if driven away before the mind thinks, if possible that such a thing could be, you are saved

from a long struggle. This means watchfulness and ready action. Jesus said: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Alexander said: "I conquered the world by deciding quickly to act, and then acting." Apply both to the evil suggestions of life and you may do the same.

But suppose they have been entertained. Then take Paul's advice and "cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" and, Grant-like, "keep at it on this line if it takes life's summer." There is cleansing in the blood of the Lamb. Cyrus Field, in giving his account of the Atlantic telegraph, says: "It has been a long and hard struggle. Nearly thirteen years of anxious watching and ceaseless toil. Often has my heart been ready to sink. Many times, when wandering in the forests of Newfoundland in the pelting rain, or on the deck of ships on dark, stormy nights, alone, far from home, I have almost accused myself of madness and folly, to sacrifice the peace of my family and all the hopes of life for what might prove after all but a dream. I have seen my companions, one after another, fall by my side, and I feared that I, too, might not live to see the end, and yet one hope has led me on, and I have prayed that I might not taste of death until this work was accomplished. That prayer is answered, and now, beyond all acknowledgements to man is the feeling of gratitude to Almighty God." So our Lord waited and sacrificed in view of bridging the chasm made by sin, and,

having seen the travail of his soul, he will come to us with gifts of eternal life, the reward to the faithful. Abraham watched and guarded the sacrifice as the sun climbed higher and the heat became more intense. Twelve o'clock, and I see him driving them away. Three, four, five and six o'clock, and he is still there. But when evening came, with it came the lamp of life. The sacrifice is accepted of God. A bright light kisses the skies as incense went up from that altar, and God appeared with gifts from that altar, and God appeared with gifts for his faithful friend.

Listen! God speaks. "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age, and unto thy seed shall be given the land from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates, the Canaanites and the Jebusites." Well might he wait and watch for such a blessing, reaching even to the farthest generation. So shall it be with the faithful saints of all ages. They need no burning lamp or ringing bells, for God will attend their exit and coronation, and He is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all."

Princes hold the crown at the coronation of their successors, but the saints order the angels to "bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all," and the choirs chant: "To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am sat down with my father on his throne." Again: "He that overcometh shall

inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

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